WICCAN / PAGAN HOLYDAYS THE EIGHT SABBATS OF WITCHCRAFT *A SEASONAL INTERPRETATION*

THE DEATH OF LLEW: A Seasonal Interpretation

"Not of father, nor of mother
Was my blood, was my body.
I was spellbound by Gwydion,
Prime enchanter of the Britons,
When he formed me from nine blossoms."

"Hanes Blodeuwedd" - R. Graves, trans.

In most Pagan cultures, the sun god is seen as split between two rival personalities: the god of light and his twin, his "weird", his "other self", the god of darkness. They are Gawain and the Green Knight, Gwyn and Gwythyr, Llew and Goronwy, Lugh and Balor, Balan and Balin, the Holly King and the Oak King, etc. Often they are depicted as fighting seasonal battles for the favor of their goddess/lover, such as Creiddylad or Blodeuwedd, who represents Nature.

The god of light is always born at the winter solstice, and his strength waxes with the lengthening days, until the moment of his greatest power, the summer solstice, the longest day. And, like a look in a mirror, his "shadow self", the lord of darkness, is born at the summer solstice, and his strength waxes with the lengthening nights until the moment of his greatest power, the winter solstice, the longest night.

Indirect evidence supporting this mirror-birth pattern is strongest in the Christianized form of the Pagan myth. Many writers, from Robert Graves to Stewart Farrar, have repeatedly pointed out that Jesus was identified with the Holly King, while John the Baptist was the Oak King. That is why, "of all the trees that are in the wood, the Holly tree bears the crown." If the birth of Jesus, the "light of the world", is celebrated at mid-winter, Christian folk tradition insists that John the Oak King (the "dark of the world"?) was born (rather than died) at mid-summer.

It is at this point that I must diverge from the opinion of Robert Graves and other writers who have followed him. Graves believes that at midsummer, the Sun King is slain by his rival, the God of Darkness; just as the God of Darkness is, in turn, slain by the God of Light at midwinter. And yet, in Christian folk tradition (derived

from the older Pagan strain), it is births, not deaths, that are associated with the solstices. For the feast of John the Baptist, this is all the more conspicuous, as it breaks the rules regarding all other saints.

John is the ONLY saint in the entire Catholic hagiography whose feast day is a commemoration of his birth, rather than his death. A generation ago, Catholic nuns were fond of explaining that a saint is commemorated on the anniversary of his or her death because it was really a "birth" into the Kingdom of Heaven. But John the Baptist, the sole exception, is emphatically commemorated on the anniversary of his birth into THIS world. Although this makes no sense viewed from a Christian perspective, it makes perfect poetic sense from the viewpoint of Pagan symbolism. (John's earlier Pagan associations are treated in my essay on Midsummer.)

So if births are associated with the solstices, when do the symbolic deaths occur? When does Goronwy slay Llew and when does Llew, in his turn, slay Goronwy? When does darkness conquer light or light conquer darkness? Obviously (to me, at least), it must be at the two equinoxes. At the autumnal equinox, the hours of light in the day are eclipsed by the hours of darkness. At the vernal equinox, the process is reversed. Also, the autumnal equinox, called "Harvest Home", is already associated with sacrifice, principally that of the spirit of grain or vegetation. In this case, the god of light would be identical.

In Welsh mythology in particular, there is a startling vindication of the seasonal placement of the sun god's death, the significance of which occurred to me in a recent dream, and which I haven't seen elsewhere. Llew is the Welsh god of light, and his name means "lion". (The lion is often the symbol of a sun god.) He is betrayed by his "virgin" wife Blodeuwedd, into standing with one foot on the rim of a cauldron and the other on the back of a goat. It is only in this way that Llew can be killed, and Blodeuwedd's lover, Goronwy, Llew's dark self, is hiding nearby with a spear at the ready. But as Llew is struck with it, he is not killed. He is instead transformed into an eagle.

Putting this in the form of a Bardic riddle, it would go something like this: Who can tell in what season the Lion (Llew), betrayed by the Virgin (Blodeuwedd), poised on the Balance, is transformed into an Eagle? My readers who are astrologers are probably already gasping in recognition. The sequence is astrological and in proper order: Leo (lion), Virgo (virgin), Libra (balance), and Scorpio (for which the eagle is a well-known alternative symbol). Also, the remaining icons, cauldron and goat, could arguably symbolize Cancer and Capricorn (representing summer and winter), the signs beginning with the two solstice points. So Llew is balanced between cauldron and goat, between summer and winter, on the balance (Libra) point of the autumnal equinox, with one foot on the summer solstice and one foot on the winter solstice.

This, of course, is the answer to a related Bardic riddle. Repeatedly, the "Mabinogion" tells us that Llew must be standing with one foot on the cauldron and one foot on the goat's back in order to be killed. But nowhere does it tell us why. Why is this particular situation the ONLY one in which Llew can be overcome? Because it represents the equinox point. And the autumnal equinox is the only time of the entire year when light (Llew) can be overcome by darkness (Goronwy).

It should now come as no surprise that, when it is time for Llew to kill Goronwy in his turn, Llew insists that Goronwy stands where he once stood while he (Llew) casts the spear. This is no mere vindictiveness on Llew's part. For, although the "Mabinogion" does not say so, it should by now be obvious that this is the only time when Goronwy can be overcome. Light can overcome darkness only at the equinox -- this time the vernal equinox. (Curiously, even the Christian tradition retains this association, albeit in a distorted form, by celebrating Jesus' death near the time of the vernal equinox.)

Although it is far more speculative than the preceding material, a final consideration would pursue this mirror-like life pattern of Llew and Goronwy to its ultimate conclusion. Although Llew is struck with the sunlight spear at the autumnal equinox, and so "dies" as a human, it takes a while before Gwydion discovers him in his eagle form. How long? We may speculate 13 weeks, when the sun reaches the midpoint of the sign (or form) of the eagle, Scorpio -- on Halloween. And if this is true, it may be that Llew, the sun god, finally "dies" to the upper world on Halloween, and now passes through the gates of death, where he is immediately crowned king of the underworld, the Lord of Misrule! (In medieval tradition, the person proclaimed as "Lord of Misrule" reigned from Halloween to Old Christmas -- or, before the calender changes, until the winter solstice.)

Meanwhile, Goronwy (with Blodeuwedd at his side) is crowned king in the upper world, and occupies Llew's old throne, beginning on Halloween. Thus, by winter solstice, Goronwy has reached his position of greatest strength in OUR world, at the same moment that Llew, now sitting on Goronwy's old throne, reaches his position of greatest strength in the underworld. However, at the moment of the winter solstice, Llew is born again, as a babe, (and as his own son!) into our world. And as Llew later reaches manhood and dispatches Goronwy at the vernal equinox, Goronwy will then ascend the underworld throne at Beltane, but will be reborn into our world at midsummer, as a babe, later to defeat Llew all over again. And so the cycle closes at last, resembling nothing so much as an intricately woven, never-ending bit of Celtic knotwork.

So Midsummer (to me, at least) is a celebration of the sun god at his zenith, a crowned king on his throne. He is at the height of his power and still 1/4 of a year away from his ritual death at the hands of his rival. However, at the very moment of his greatest strength, his dark twin, the seed of his destruction, is born -- just as the days begin to shorten. The spear and the cauldron have often been used as symbols for this holiday and it should now be easy to see why. Sun gods are virtually always associated with spears (even Jesus is pierced by one), and the midsummer cauldron of Cancer is a symbol of the Goddess in her fullness. If we have learned anything from this story from the fourth branch of the "Mabinogion", it is about the power of myth -- how it may still instruct and guide us, many centuries after it has passed from oral to written tradition. And in studying it, we have barely scratched the surface.

WICCAN / PAGAN HOLYDAYS THE EIGHT SABBATS OF WITCHCRAFT
SAMHAIN or All Hallows' Eve

ALL HALLOW'S EVE

Halloween. Sly does it. Tiptoe catspaw. Slide and creep. But why? What for? How? Who? When! Where did it all begin? "You don't know, do you?" asks Carapace Clavicle Moundshroud climbing out under the pile of leaves under the Halloween Tree. "You don't REALLY know!"
--Ray Bradbury from "The Halloween Tree"

Samhain. All Hallows. All Hallow's Eve. Hallow E'en. Halloween. The most magical night of the year. Exactly opposite Beltane on the wheel of the year, Halloween is Beltane's dark twin. A night of glowing jack-o-lanterns, bobbing for apples, tricks or treats, and dressing in costume. A night of ghost stories and seances, tarot card readings and scrying with mirrors. A night of power, when the veil that separates our world from the Otherworld is at its thinnest. A "spirit night", as they say in Wales.

All Hallow's Eve is the eve of All Hallow's Day (November 1st). And for once, even popular tradition remembers that the Eve is more important than the Day itself, the traditional celebration focusing on October 31st, beginning at sundown. And this seems only fitting for the great Celtic New Year's festival. Not that the holiday was Celtic only. In fact, it is startling how many ancient and unconnected cultures (the Egyptians and pre-Spanish Mexicans, for example) celebrated this as a festival of the dead. But the majority of our modern traditions can be traced to the British Isles.

The Celts called it Samhain, which means "summer's end", according to their ancient two-fold division of the year, when summer ran from Beltane to Samhain and winter ran from Samhain to Beltane. (Some modern Covens echo this structure by letting the High Priest "rule" the Coven beginning on Samhain, with rulership returned to the High Priestess at Beltane.) According to the later four-fold division of the year, Samhain is seen as "autumn's end" and the beginning of winter. Samhain is pronounced (depending on where you're from) as "sow-in" (in Ireland), or "sow-een" (in Wales), or "sav-en" (in Scotland), or (inevitably) "sam-hane" (in the U.S., where we don't speak Gaelic).

Not only is Samhain the end of autumn; it is also, more importantly, the end of the old year and the beginning of the new. Celtic New Year's Eve, when the new year begins with the onset of the dark phase of the year, just as the new day begins at sundown. There are many representations of Celtic gods with two faces, and it surely must have been one of them who held sway over Samhain. Like his Greek counterpart Janus, he would straddle the threshold, one face turned toward the past in commemoration of those who died during the last year, and one face gazing hopefully toward the future, mystic eyes attempting to pierce the veil and divine what the coming year holds. These two themes, celebrating the dead and divining the future, are inexorably intertwined in Samhain, as they are likely to be in any New Year's celebration.

As a feast of the dead, it was believed the dead could, if they wished, return to the land of the living for this one night, to celebrate with their family, tribe, or clan. And so the great burial mounds of Ireland (sidh mounds) were opened up, with lighted torches lining the walls, so the dead could find their way. Extra places were set at the table and food set out for any who had died that year. And there are many stories that tell of Irish heroes making raids on the Underworld while the gates of faery stood open, though all must return to their appointed places by cock-crow.

As a feast of divination, this was the night par excellence for peering into the future. The reason for this has to do with the Celtic view of time. In a culture that uses a linear concept of time, like our modern one, New Year's Eve is simply a milestone on a very long road that stretches in a straight line from birth to death. Thus, the New Year's festival is a part of time. The ancient Celtic view of time, however, is cyclical. And in this framework, New Year's Eve represents a point outside of time, when the natural order of the universe dissolves back into primordial chaos, preparatory to re- establishing itself in a new order. Thus, Samhain is a night that exists outside of time and hence it may be used to view any other point in time. At no other holiday is a tarot card reading, crystal reading, or tea-leaf reading so likely to succeed.

The Christian religion, with its emphasis on the "historical" Christ and his act of redemption 2000 years ago, is forced into a linear view of time, where "seeing the

future" is an illogical proposition. In fact, from the Christian perspective, any attempt to do so is seen as inherently evil. This did not keep the medieval Church from co-opting Samhain's other motif, commemoration of the dead. To the Church, however, it could never be a feast for all the dead, but only the blessed dead, all those hallowed (made holy) by obedience to God - thus, All Hallow's, or Hallowmas, later All Saints and All Souls.

There are so many types of divination that are traditional to Hallowstide, it is possible to mention only a few. Girls were told to place hazel nuts along the front of the firegrate, each one to symbolize one of her suitors. She could then divine her future husband by chanting,

"If you love me, pop and fly;
if you hate me, burn and die."

Several methods used the apple, that most popular of Halloween fruits. You should slice an apple through the equator (to reveal the five-pointed star within) and then eat it by candlelight before a mirror. Your future spouse will then appear over your shoulder. Or, peel an apple, making sure the peeling comes off in one long strand, reciting,

"I pare this apple round and round again;
My sweetheart's name to flourish on the plain:
I fling the unbroken paring o'er my head,
My sweetheart's letter on the ground to read."

Or, you might set a snail to crawl through the ashes of your hearth. The considerate little creature will then spell out the initial letter as it moves.

Perhaps the most famous icon of the holiday is the jack-o-lantern. Various authorities attribute it to either Scottish or Irish origin. However, it seems clear that it was used as a lantern by people who traveled the road this night, the scary face to frighten away spirits or faeries who might otherwise lead one astray. Set on porches and in windows, they cast the same spell of protection over the household. (The American pumpkin seems to have forever superseded the European gourd as the jack-o-lantern of choice.) Bobbing for apples may well represent the remnants of a Pagan "baptism" rite called a "seining", according to some writers. The water-filled tub is a latter-day Cauldron of Regeneration, into which the novice's head is immersed. The fact that the participant in this folk game was usually blindfolded with hands tied behind the back also puts one in mind of a traditional Craft initiation ceremony.

The custom of dressing in costume and "trick-or-treating" is of Celtic origin with survivals particularly strong in Scotland. However, there are some important differences from the modern version. In the first place, the custom was not relegated to children, but was actively indulged in by adults as well. Also, the "treat" which was required was often one of spirits (the liquid variety). This has

recently been revived by college students who go "trick-or-drinking". And in ancient times, the roving bands would sing seasonal carols from house to house, making the tradition very similar to Yuletide wassailing. In fact, the custom known as "caroling", now connected exclusively with mid-winter, was once practiced at all the major holidays. Finally, in Scotland at least, the tradition of dressing in costume consisted almost exclusively of cross-dressing (i.e., men dressing as women, and women as men). It seems as though ancient societies provided an opportunity for people to "try on" the role of the opposite gender for one night of the year. (Although in Scotland, this is admittedly less dramatic - but more confusing - since men were in the habit of wearing skirt-like kilts anyway. Oh well...)

To Witches, Halloween is one of the four High Holidays, or Greater Sabbats, or cross-quarter days. Because it is the most important holiday of the year, it is sometimes called "THE Great Sabbat." It is an ironic fact that the newer, self-created Covens tend to use the older name of the holiday, Samhain, which they have discovered through modern research. While the older hereditary and traditional Covens often use the newer name, Halloween, which has been handed down through oral tradition within their Coven. (This is often holds true for the names of the other holidays, as well. One may often get an indication of a Coven's antiquity by noting what names it uses for the holidays.)

With such an important holiday, Witches often hold two distinct celebrations. First, a large Halloween party for non-Craft friends, often held on the previous weekend. And second, a Coven ritual held on Halloween night itself, late enough so as not to be interrupted by trick-or-treaters. If the rituals are performed properly, there is often the feeling of invisible friends taking part in the rites. Another date which may be utilized in planning celebrations is the actual cross-quarter day, or Old Halloween, or Halloween O.S. (Old Style). This occurs when the sun has reached 15 degrees Scorpio, an astrological "power point" symbolized by the Eagle. This year (1988), the date is November 6th at 10:55 pm CST, with the celebration beginning at sunset. Interestingly, this date (Old Halloween) was also appropriated by the Church as the holiday of Martinmas.

Of all the Witchcraft holidays, Halloween is the only one that still boasts anything near to popular celebration. Even though it is typically relegated to children (and the young-at-heart) and observed as an evening affair only, many of its traditions are firmly rooted in Paganism. Interestingly, some schools have recently attempted to abolish Halloween parties on the grounds that it violates the separation of state and religion. Speaking as a Pagan, I would be saddened by the success of this move, but as a supporter of the concept of religion-free public education, I fear I must concede the point. Nonetheless, it seems only right that there SHOULD be one night of the year when our minds are turned toward thoughts of the

supernatural. A night when both Pagans and non-Pagans may ponder the mysteries of the Otherworld and its inhabitants. And if you are one of them, may all your jack-o'lanterns burn bright on this All Hallow's Eve.

WICCAN / PAGAN HOLYDAYS THE EIGHT SABBATS OF WITCHCRAFT
YULE or Midwinter's Eve

MIDWINTER'S EVE: YULE

Our Christian friends are often quite surprised at how enthusiastically we Pagans celebrate the "Christmas season". Even though we prefer to use the word "Yule", and our celebrations may peak a few days BEFORE the 25th, we nonetheless follow many of the traditional customs of the season: decorated trees, carolling, presents, Yule logs, and mistletoe. We might even go so far as putting up a "Nativity set", though for us the three central characters are likely to be interpreted as Mother Nature, Father Time, and the Baby Sun-God. None of this will come as a surprise to anyone who knows the true history of the holiday, of course.
In fact, if truth be known, the holiday of Christmas has always been more Pagan than Christian, with it's associations of Nordic divination, Celtic fertility rites, and Roman Mithraism. That is why both Martin Luther and John Calvin abhorred it, why the Puritans refused to acknowledge it, much less celebrate it (to them, no day of the year could be more holy than the Sabbath), and why it was even made ILLEGAL in Boston! The holiday was already too closely associated with the birth of older Pagan gods and heroes. And many of them (like Oedipus, Theseus, Hercules, Perseus, Jason, Dionysus, Apollo, Mithra, Horus and even Arthur) possessed a narrative of birth, death, and resurrection that was uncomfortably close to that of Jesus. And to make matters worse, many of them pre-dated the Christian Savior.
Ultimately, of course, the holiday is rooted deeply in the cycle of the year. It is the Winter Solstice that is being celebrated, seed-time of the year, the longest night and shortest day. It is the birthday of the new Sun King, the Son of God -- by whatever name you choose to call him. On this darkest of nights, the Goddess becomes the Great Mother and once again gives birth. And it makes perfect poetic sense that on the longest night of the winter, "the dark night of our souls", there springs the new spark of hope, the Sacred Fire, the Light of the World, the Coel

Coeth.
That is why Pagans have as much right to claim this holiday as Christians. Perhaps even more so, as the Christians were rather late in laying claim to it, and tried more than once to reject it. There had been a tradition in the West that Mary bore the child Jesus on the twenty-fifth day, but no one could seem to decide on the month. Finally, in 320 C.E., the Catholic Fathers in Rome decided to make it December, in an effort to co-opt the Mithraic celebration of the Romans and the Yule celebrations of the Celts and Saxons.
There was never much pretense that the date they finally chose was historically accurate. Shepherds just don't "tend their flocks by night" in the high pastures in the dead of winter! But if one wishes to use the New Testament as historical evidence, this reference may point to sometime in the spring as the time of Jesus's birth. This is because the lambing season occurs in the spring and that is the only time when shepherds are likely to "watch their flocks by night" -- to make sure the lambing goes well. Knowing this, the Eastern half of the Church continued to reject December 25, preferring a "movable date" fixed by their astrologers according to the moon.
Thus, despite its shaky start (for over three centuries, no one knew when Jesus was supposed to have been born!), December 25 finally began to catch on. By 529, it was a civic holiday, and all work or public business (except that of cooks, bakers, or any that contributed to the delight of the holiday) was prohibited by the Emperor Justinian. In 563, the Council of Braga forbade fasting on Christmas Day, and four years later the Council of Tours proclaimed the twelve days from December 25 to Epiphany as a sacred, festive season. This last point is perhaps the hardest to impress upon the modern reader, who is lucky to get a single day off work. Christmas, in the Middle Ages, was not a SINGLE day, but rather a period of TWELVE days, from December 25 to January 6. The Twelve Days of Christmas, in fact. It is certainly lamentable that the modern world has abandoned this approach, along with the popular Twelfth Night celebrations.
Of course, the Christian version of the holiday spread to manycountries no faster than Christianity itself, which means that "Christmas" wasn't celebrated in Ireland until the late fifth century; in England, Switzerland, and Austria until the seventh; in Germany until the eighth; and in the Slavic lands until the ninth and tenth. Not that these countries lacked their own mid-winter celebrations of Yuletide. Long before the world had heard of Jesus, Pagans had been observing the season by bringing in the Yule log, wishing on it, and lighting it from the remains of last year's log. Riddles were posed and answered, magic and rituals were practiced, wild boars were sacrificed and consumed along with large quantities of liquor, corn dollies were carried from house to house while carolling, fertility rites were practiced (girls standing under a sprig of mistletoe were subject to a bit more than a

kiss), and divinations were cast for the coming Spring. Many of these Pagan customs, in an appropriately watered-down form, have entered the mainstream of Christian celebration, though most celebrants do not realize (or do not mention it, if they do) their origins.

For modern Witches, Yule (from the Anglo-Saxon "Yula", meaning "wheel" of the year) is usually celebrated on the actual Winter Solstice, which may vary by a few days, though it usually occurs on or around December 21st. It is a Lesser Sabbat or Lower Holiday in the modern Pagan calendar, one of the four quarter-days of the year, but a very important one. This year (1988) it occurs on December 21st at 9:28 am CST. Pagan customs are still enthusiastically followed. Once, the Yule log had been the center of the celebration. It was lighted on the eve of the solstice (it should light on the first try) and must be kept burning for twelve hours, for good luck. It should be made of ash. Later, the Yule log was replaced by the Yule tree but, instead of burning it, burning candles were placed on it. In Christianity, Protestants might claim that Martin Luther invented the custom, and Catholics might grant St. Boniface the honor, but the custom can demonstrably be traced back through the Roman Saturnalia all the way to ancient Egypt. Needless to say, such a tree should be cut down rather than purchased, and should be disposed of by burning, the proper way to dispatch any sacred object.

Along with the evergreen, the holly and the ivy and the mistletoe were important plants of the season, all symbolizing fertility and everlasting life. Mistletoe was especially venerated by the Celtic Druids, who cut it with a golden sickle on the sixth night of the moon, and believed it to be an aphrodisiac. (Magically -- not medicinally! It's highly toxic!) But aphrodisiacs must have been the smallest part of the Yuletide menu in ancient times, as contemporary reports indicate that the tables fairly creaked under the strain of every type of good food. And drink! The most popular of which was the "wassail cup" deriving its name from the Anglo-Saxon term "waes hael" (be whole or hale).

Medieval Christmas folklore seems endless: that animals will all kneel down as the Holy Night arrives, that bees hum the "100th psalm" on Christmas Eve, that a windy Christmas will bring good luck, that a person born on Christmas Day can see the Little People, that a cricket on the hearth brings good luck, that if one opens all the doors of the house at midnight all the evil spirits will depart, that you will have one lucky month for each Christmas pudding you sample, that the tree must be taken down by Twelfth Night or bad luck is sure to follow, that "if Christmas on a Sunday be, a windy winter we shall see", that "hours of sun on Christmas Day, so many frosts in the month of May", that one can use the Twelve Days of Christmas to predict the weather for each of the twelve months of the coming year, and so on. Remembering that most Christmas customs are ultimately based upon older Pagan customs, it only remains for modern Pagans to reclaim their lost traditions. In

doing so, we can share many common customs with our Christian friends, albeit with a slightly different interpretation. And thus we all share in the beauty of this most magical of seasons, when the Mother Goddess once again gives birth to the baby Sun-God and sets the wheel in motion again. To conclude with a long-overdue paraphrase, "Goddess bless us, every one!"

WICCAN / PAGAN HOLYDAYS THE EIGHT SABBATS OF WITCHCRAFT
IMBOLC or Candlemas

CANDLEMAS: The Light Returns

It seems quite impossible that the holiday of Candlemas should be considered the beginning of Spring. Here in the Heartland, February 2nd may see a blanket of snow mantling the Mother. Or, if the snows have gone, you may be sure the days are filled with drizzle, slush, and steel-grey skies -- the dreariest weather of the year. In short, the perfect time for a Pagan Festival of Lights. And as for Spring, although this may seem a tenuous beginning, all the little buds, flowers and leaves will have arrived on schedule before Spring runs its course to Beltane.
"Candlemas" is the Christianized name for the holiday, of course. The older Pagan names were Imbolc and Oimelc. "Imbolc" means, literally, "in the belly" (of the Mother). For in the womb of Mother Earth, hidden from our mundane sight but sensed by a keener vision, there are stirrings. The seed that was planted in her womb at the solstice is quickening and the new year grows. "Oimelc" means "milk of ewes", for it is also lambing season.
The holiday is also called "Brigit's Day", in honor of the great Irish Goddess Brigit. At her shrine, the ancient Irish capitol of Kildare, a group of 19 priestesses (no men allowed) kept a perpetual flame burning in her honor. She was considered a goddess of fire, patroness of smithcraft, poetry and healing (especially the healing touch of midwifery). This tripartite symbolism was occasionally expressed by saying that Brigit had two sisters, also named Brigit. (Incidentally, another form of the name Brigit is Bride, and it is thus She bestows her special patronage on any woman about to be married or handfasted, the woman being called "bride" in her honor.)
The Roman Catholic Church could not very easily call the Great Goddess of

Ireland a demon, so they canonized her instead. Henceforth, she would be "Saint" Brigit, patron SAINT of smithcraft, poetry, and healing. They "explained" this by telling the Irish peasants that Brigit was "really" an early Christian missionary sent to the Emerald Isle, and that the miracles she performed there "misled" the common people into believing that she was a goddess. For some reason, the Irish swallowed this. (There is no limit to what the Irish imagination can convince itself of. For example, they also came to believe that Brigit was the "foster-mother" of Jesus, giving no thought to the implausibility of Jesus having spent his boyhood in Ireland!)

Brigit's holiday was chiefly marked by the kindling of sacred fires, since she symbolized the fire of birth and healing, the fire of the forge, and the fire of poetic inspiration. Bonfires were lighted on the beacon tors, and chandlers celebrated their special holiday. The Roman Church was quick to confiscate this symbolism as well, using "Candlemas" as the day to bless all the church candles that would be used for the coming liturgical year. (Catholics will be reminded that the following day, St. Blaise's Day, is remembered for using the newly-blessed candles to bless the throats of parishioners, keeping them from colds, flu, sore throats, etc.)

The Catholic Church, never one to refrain from piling holiday upon holiday, also called it the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary. (It is surprising how many of the old Pagan holidays were converted to Maryan Feasts.) The symbol of the Purification may seem a little obscure to modern readers, but it has to do with the old custom of "churching women". It was believed that women were impure for six weeks after giving birth. And since Mary gave birth at the winter solstice, she wouldn't be purified until February 2nd. In Pagan symbolism, this might be re-translated as when the Great Mother once again becomes the Young Maiden Goddess.

Today, this holiday is chiefly connected to weather lore. Even our American folk-calendar keeps the tradition of "Groundhog's Day", a day to predict the coming weather, telling us that if the Groundhog sees his shadow, there will be "six more weeks" of bad weather (i.e., until the next old holiday, Lady Day). This custom is ancient. An old British rhyme tells us that "If Candlemas Day be bright and clear, there'll be two winters in the year." Actually, all of the cross-quarter days can be used as "inverse" weather predictors, whereas the quarter-days are used as "direct" weather predictors.

Like the other High Holidays or Great Sabbats of the Witches' year, Candlemas is sometimes celebrated on it's alternate date, astrologically determined by the sun's reaching 15-degrees Aquarius, or Candlemas Old Style (in 1988, February 3rd, at 9:03 am CST). Another holiday that gets mixed up in this is Valentine's Day. Ozark folklorist Vance Randolf makes this quite clear by noting that the old-timers used to celebrate Groundhog's Day on February 14th. This same displacement is

evident in Eastern Orthodox Christianity as well. Their habit of celebrating the birth of Jesus on January 6th, with a similar post-dated shift in the six-week period that follows it, puts the Feast of the Purification of Mary on February 14th. It is amazing to think that the same confusion and lateral displacement of one of the old folk holidays can be seen from the Russian steppes to the Ozark hills, but such seems to be the case!

Incidentally, there is speculation among linguistic scholars that the vary name of "Valentine" has Pagan origins. It seems that it was customary for French peasants of the Middle Ages to pronounce a "g" as a "v". Consequently, the original term may have been the French "galantine", which yields the English word "gallant". The word originally refers to a dashing young man known for his "affaires d'amour", a true galaunt. The usual associations of V(G)alantine's Day make much more sense in this light than their vague connection to a legendary "St. Valentine" can produce. Indeed, the Church has always found it rather difficult to explain this nebulous saint's connection to the secular pleasures of flirtation and courtly love. For modern Witches, Candlemas O.S. may then be seen as the Pagan version of Valentine's Day, with a de-emphasis of "hearts and flowers" and an appropriate re-emphasis of Pagan carnal frivolity. This also re-aligns the holiday with the ancient Roman Lupercalia, a fertility festival held at this time, in which the priests of Pan ran through the streets of Rome whacking young women with goatskin thongs to make them fertile. The women seemed to enjoy the attention and often stripped in order to afford better targets.

One of the nicest folk-customs still practiced in many countries, and especially by Witches in the British Isles and parts of the U.S., is to place a lighted candle in each and every window of the house, beginning at sundown on Candlemas Eve (February 1st), allowing them to continue burning until sunrise. Make sure that such candles are well seated against tipping and guarded from nearby curtains, etc. What a cheery sight it is on this cold, bleak and dreary night to see house after house with candle-lit windows! And, of course, if you are your Coven's chandler, or if you just happen to like making candles, Candlem as Day is THE day for doing it. Some Covens hold candle-making parties and try to make and bless all the candles they'll be using for the whole year on this day.

Other customs of the holiday include weaving "Brigit's crosses" from straw or wheat to hang around the house for protection, performing rites of spiritual cleansing and purification, making "Brigit's beds" to ensure fertility of mind and spirit (and body, if desired), and making Crowns of Light (i.e. of candles) for the High Priestess to wear for the Candlemas Circle, similar to those worn on St. Lucy's Day in Scandinavian countries. All in all, this Pagan Festival of Lights, sacred to the young Maiden Goddess, is one of the most beautiful and poetic of the year.

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WICCAN / PAGAN HOLYDAYS THE EIGHT SABBATS OF WITCHCRAFT
EOSTARA or Lady Day

LADY DAY: The Vernal Equinox

Now comes the Vernal Equinox, and the season of Spring reaches it's apex, halfway through its journey from Candlemas to Beltane. Once again, night and day stand in perfect balance, with the powers of light on the ascendancy. The god of light now wins a victory over his twin, the god of darkness. In the Mabinogion myth reconstruction which I have proposed, this is the day on which the restored Llew takes his vengeance on Goronwy by piercing him with the sunlight spear. For Llew was restored/reborn at the Winter Solstice and is now well/old enough to vanquish his rival/twin and mate with his lover/mother. And the great Mother Goddess, who has returned to her Virgin aspect at Candlemas, welcomes the young sun god's embraces and conceives a child. The child will be born nine months from now, at the next Winter Solstice. And so the cycle closes at last.
We think that the customs surrounding the celebration of the spring equinox were imported from Mediterranean lands, although there can be no doubt that the first inhabitants of the British Isles observed it, as evidence from megalithic sites shows. But it was certainly more popular to the south, where people celebrated the holiday as New Year's Day, and claimed it as the first day of the first sign of the Zodiac, Aries. However you look at it, it is certainly a time of new beginnings, as a simple glance at Nature will prove.
In the Roman Catholic Church, there are two holidays which get mixed up with the Vernal Equinox. The first, occurring on the fixed calendar day of March 25th in the old liturgical calendar, is called the Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (or B.V.M., as she was typically abbreviated in Catholic Missals). "Annunciation" means an announcement. This is the day that the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she was "in the family way". Naturally, this had to be announced since Mary, being still a virgin, would have no other means of knowing it. (Quit scoffing, O ye of little faith!) Why did the Church pick the Vernal Equinox for the commemoration of this event? Because it was necessary to have Mary conceive the child Jesus a full nine months before his birth at the Winter

Solstice (i.e., Christmas, celebrated on the fixed calendar date of December 25). Mary's pregnancy would take the natural nine months to complete, even if the conception was a bit unorthodox.

As mentioned before, the older Pagan equivalent of this scene focuses on the joyous process of natural conception, when the young virgin Goddess (in this case, "virgin" in the original sense of meaning "unmarried") mates with the young solar God, who has just displaced his rival. This is probably not their first mating, however. In the mythical sense, the couple may have been lovers since Candlemas, when the young God reached puberty. But the young Goddess was recently a mother (at the Winter Solstice) and is probably still nursing her new child. Therefore, conception is naturally delayed for six weeks or so and, despite earlier matings with the God, She does not conceive until (surprise!) the Vernal Equinox. This may also be their Hand-fasting, a sacred marriage between God and Goddess called a Hierogamy, the ultimate Great Rite. Probably the nicest study of this theme occurs in M. Esther Harding's book, "Woman's Mysteries". Probably the nicest description of it occurs in M. Z. Bradley's "Mists of Avalon", in the scene where Morgan and Arthur assume the sacred roles. (Bradley follows the British custom of transferring the episode to Beltane, when the climate is more suited to its outdoor celebration.)

The other Christian holiday which gets mixed up in this is Easter. Easter, too, celebrates the victory of a god of light (Jesus) over darkness (death), so it makes sense to place it at this season. Ironically, the name "Easter" was taken from the name of a Teutonic lunar Goddess, Eostre (from whence we also get the name of the female hormone, estrogen). Her chief symbols were the bunny (both for fertility and because her worshipers saw a hare in the full moon) and the egg (symbolic of the cosmic egg of creation), images which Christians have been hard pressed to explain. Her holiday, the Oestara, was held on the Vernal Equinox Full Moon. Of course, the Church doesn't celebrate full moons, even if they do calculate by them, so they planted their Easter on the following Sunday. Thus, Easter is always the first Sunday, after the first Full Moon, after the Vernal Equinox. If you've ever wondered why Easter moved all around the calendar, now you know. (By the way, the Catholic Church was so adamant about NOT incorporating lunar Goddess symbolism that they added a further calculation: if Easter Sunday were to fall on the Full Moon itself, then Easter was postponed to the following Sunday instead.)

Incidentally, this raises another point: recently, some Pagan traditions began referring to the Vernal Equinox as Oestara. Historically, this is incorrect. Oestara is a lunar holiday, honoring a lunar Goddess, at the Vernal Full Moon. Hence, the name "Oestara" is best reserved to the nearest Esbat, rather than the Sabbat itself. How this happened is difficult to say. However, it is notable that some of the same

groups misappropriated the term "Lady Day" for Beltane, which left no good folk name for the Equinox. Thus, Oestara was misappropriated for it, completing a chain-reaction of displacement. Needless to say, the old and accepted folk name for the Vernal Equinox is "Lady Day". Christians sometimes insist that the title is in honor of Mary and her Annunciation, but Pagans will smile knowingly.

Another mythological motif which must surely arrest our attention at this time of year is that of the descent of the God or Goddess into the Underworld. Perhaps we see this most clearly in the Christian tradition. Beginning with his death on the cross on Good Friday, it is said that Jesus "descended into hell" for the three days that his body lay entombed. But on the third day (that is, Easter Sunday), his body and soul rejoined, he arose from the dead and ascended into heaven. By a strange "coincidence", most ancient Pagan religions speak of the Goddess descending into the Underworld, also for a period of three days.

Why three days? If we remember that we are here dealing with the lunar aspect of the Goddess, the reason should be obvious. As the text of one Book of Shadows gives it, "...as the moon waxes and wanes, and walks three nights in darkness, so the Goddess once spent three nights in the Kingdom of Death." In our modern world, alienated as it is from nature, we tend to mark the time of the New Moon (when no moon is visible) as a single date on a calendar. We tend to forget that the moon is also hidden from our view on the day before and the day after our calendar date. But this did not go unnoticed by our ancestors, who always speak of the Goddess's sojourn into the land of Death as lasting for three days. Is it any wonder then, that we celebrate the next Full Moon (the Oestara) as the return of the Goddess from chthonic regions?

Naturally, this is the season to celebrate the victory of life over death, as any nature-lover will affirm. And the Christian religion was not misguided by celebrating Christ's victory over death at this same season. Nor is Christ the only solar hero to journey into the underworld. King Arthur, for example, does the same thing when he sets sail in his magical ship, Prydwen, to bring back precious gifts (i.e. the gifts of life) from the Land of the Dead, as we are told in the "Mabinogi". Welsh triads allude to Gwydion and Amaethon doing much the same thing. In fact, this theme is so universal that mythologists refer to it by a common phrase, "the harrowing of hell".

However, one might conjecture that the descent into hell, or the land of the dead, was originally accomplished, not by a solar male deity, but by a lunar female deity. It is Nature Herself who, in Spring, returns from the Underworld with her gift of abundant life. Solar heroes may have laid claim to this theme much later. The very fact that we are dealing with a three-day period of absence should tell us we are dealing with a lunar, not solar, theme. (Although one must make exception for those occasional MALE lunar deities, such as the Assyrian god, Sin.) At any rate,

one of the nicest modern renditions of the harrowing of hell appears in many Books of Shadows as "The Descent of the Goddess". Lady Day may be especially appropriate for the celebration of this theme, whether by storytelling, reading, or dramatic re-enactment.
For modern Witches, Lady Day is one of the Lesser Sabbats or Low Holidays of the year, one of the four quarter-days. And what date will Witches choose to celebrate? They may choose the traditional folk "fixed" date of March 25th, starting on its Eve. Or they may choose the actual equinox point, when the Sun crosses the Equator and enters the astrological sign of Aries.
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WICCAN / PAGAN HOLYDAYS THE EIGHT SABBATS OF WITCHCRAFT
BELTAIN or May Day

A Celebration of MAY DAY

"Perhaps its just as well that you won't be here...to be offended by the sight of our May Day celebrations."
Lord Summerisle to Sgt. Howie from "The Wicker Man"
There are four great festivals of the Pagan Celtic year and the modern Witch's calendar, as well. The two greatest of these are Halloween (the beginning of winter) and May Day (the beginning of summer). Being opposite each other on the wheel of the year, they separate the year into halves. Halloween (also called Samhain) is the Celtic New Year and is generally considered the more important of the two, though May Day runs a close second. Indeed, in some areas -- notably Wales -- it is considered the great holiday.
May Day ushers in the fifth month of the modern calendar year, the month of May. This month is named in honor of the goddess Maia, originally a Greek mountain nymph, later identified as the most beautiful of the Seven Sisters, the Pleiades. By Zeus, she is also the mother of Hermes, god of magic. Maia's parents were Atlas and Pleione, a sea nymph.
The old Celtic name for May Day is Beltane (in its most popular Anglicized form), which is derived from the Irish Gaelic "Bealtaine" or the Scottish Gaelic "Bealtuinn", meaning "Bel-fire", the fire of the Celtic god of light (Bel, Beli or Belinus). He, in turn, may be traced to the Middle Eastern god Baal.

Other names for May Day include: Cetsamhain ("opposite Samhain"), Walpurgisnacht (in Germany), and Roodmas (the medieval Church's name). This last came from Church Fathers who were hoping to shift the common people's allegiance from the Maypole (Pagan lingham - symbol of life) to the Holy Rood (the Cross - Roman instrument of death). Incidentally, there is no historical justification for calling May 1st "Lady Day". For hundreds of years, that title has been proper to the Vernal Equinox (approx. March 21st), another holiday sacred to the Great Goddess. The nontraditional use of "Lady Day" for May 1st is quite recent (within the last 15 years), and seems to be confined to America, where it has gained widespread acceptance among certain segments of the Craft population. This rather startling departure from tradition would seem to indicate an unfamiliarity with European calendar customs, as well as a lax attitude toward scholarship among too many Pagans. A simple glance at a dictionary ("Webster's 3rd" or O.E.D.), encyclopedia ("Benet's"), or standard mythology reference (Jobe's "Dictionary of Mythology, Folklore & Symbols") would confirm the correct date for Lady Day as the Vernal Equinox.

By Celtic reckoning, the actual Beltane celebration begins on sundown of the preceding day, April 30, because the Celts always figured their days from sundown to sundown. And sundown was the proper time for Druids to kindle the great Bel-fires on the tops of the nearest beacon hill (such as Tara Hill, Co. Meath, in Ireland). These "need-fires" had healing properties, and sky-clad Witches would jump through the flames to ensure protection.

Sgt. Howie (shocked): "But they are naked!" Lord Summerisle: "Naturally. It's much too dangerous to jump through the fire with your clothes on!"

Frequently, cattle would be driven between two such bon-fires oak wood was the favorite fuel for them) and, on the morrow, they would be taken to their summer pastures.

Other May Day customs include: walking the circuit of one's property ("beating the bounds"), repairing fences and boundary markers, processions of chimney-sweeps and milk maids, archery tournaments, morris dances, sword dances, feasting, music, drinking, and maidens bathing their faces in the dew of May morning to retain their youthful beauty.

In the words of Witchcraft writers Janet and Stewart Farrar, the Beltane celebration was principly a time of "...unashamed human sexuality and fertility." Such associations include the obvious phallic symbolism of the Maypole and riding the hobby horse. Even a seemingly innocent children's nursery rhyme, "Ride a cock horse to Banburry Cross..." retains such memories. And the next line "...to see a fine Lady on a white horse" is a reference to the annual ride of "Lady Godiva" though Coventry. Every year for nearly three centuries, a sky-clad village maiden (elected Queen of the May) enacted this Pagan rite, until the Puritans put an end to

the custom.
The Puritans, in fact, reacted with pious horror to most of the May Day rites, even making Maypoles illegal in 1644. They especially attempted to suppress the "greenwood marriages" of young men and women who spent the entire night in the forest, staying out to greet the May sunrise, and bringing back boughs of flowers and garlands to decorate the village the next morning. One angry Puritan wrote that men "doe use commonly to runne into woodes in the night time, amongst maidens, to set bowes, in so muche, as I have hearde of tenne maidens whiche went to set May, and nine of them came home with childe." And another Puritan complained that, of the girls who go into the woods, "not the least one of them comes home again a virgin."
Long after the Christian form of marriage (with its insistence on sexual monogamy) had replaced the older Pagan handfasting, the rules of strict fidelity were always relaxed for the May Eve rites. Names such as Robin Hood, Maid Marian, and Little John played an important part in May Day folklore, often used as titles for the dramatis personae of the celebrations. And modern surnames such as Robinson, Hodson, Johnson, and Godkin may attest to some distant May Eve spent in the woods. These wildwood antics have inspired writers such as Kipling:
Oh, do not tell the Priest our plight,
Or he would call it a sin;
But we have been out in the woods all night,
A-conjuring Summer in!
And Lerner and Lowe:
It's May! It's May!
The lusty month of May!
Those dreary vows that ev'ryone takes,
Ev'ryone breaks.
Ev'ryone makes divine mistakes!
The lusty month of May!
It is certainly no accident that Queen Guinevere's "abduction" by Meliagrance occurs on May 1st when she and the court have gone a-Maying, or that the usually efficient Queen's Guard, on this occasion, rode unarmed.
Some of these customs seem virtually identical to the old Roman feast of flowers, the Floriala, three days of unrestrained sexuality which began at sundown April 28th and reached a crescendo on May 1st.
There are other, even older, associations with May 1st in Celtic mythology. According to the ancient Irish "Book of Invasions", the first settler of Ireland, Partholan, arrived on May 1st; and it was on May 1st that the plague came which destroyed his people. Years later, the Tuatha De Danann were conquered by the Milesians on May Day. In Welsh myth, the perennial battle between Gwythur and

Gwyn for the love of Creudylad took place each May Day; and it was on May Eve that Teirnyon lost his colts and found Pryderi. May Eve was also the occasion of a fearful scream that was heard each year throughout Wales, one of the three curses of the Coranians lifted by the skill of Lludd and Llevelys.

By the way, due to various calendrical changes down through the centuries, the traditional date of Beltane is not the same as its astrological date. This date, like all astronomically determined dates, may vary by a day or two depending on the year. However, it may be calculated easily enough by determining the date on which the sun is at 15 degrees Taurus (usually around May 5th). British Witches often refer to this date as Old Beltane, and folklorists call it Beltane O.S. ("Old Style"). Some Covens prefer to celebrate on the old date and, at the very least, it gives one options. If a Coven is operating on "Pagan Standard Time" and misses May 1st altogether, it can still throw a viable Beltane bash as long as it's before May 5th. This may also be a consideration for Covens that need to organize activities around the week-end.

This date has long been considered a "power point" of the Zodiac, and is symbolized by the Bull, one of the "tetramorph" figures featured on the Tarot cards, the World and the Wheel of Fortune. (The other three symbols are the Lion, the Eagle, and the Spirit.) Astrologers know these four figures as the symbols of the four "fixed" signs of the Zodiac (Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, and Aquarius), and these naturally align with the four Great Sabbats of Witchcraft. Christians have adopted the same iconography to represent the four gospel-writers.

But for most, it is May 1st that is the great holiday of flowers, Maypoles, and greenwood frivolity. It is no wonder that, as recently as 1977, Ian Anderson could pen the following lyrics for Jethro Tull: For the May Day is the great day,
Sung along the old straight track.
And those who ancient lines did ley
Will heed this song that calls them back.

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WICCAN / PAGAN HOLYDAYS THE EIGHT SABBATS OF WITCHCRAFT
LITHA or Midsummer's Eve

A MIDSUMMER'S CELEBRATION

"The young maid stole through the cottage door,
And blushed as she sought the Plant of pow'r;--

Thou silver glow-worm, O lend me thy light,
I must gather the mystic St. John's wort tonight,
The wonderful herb, whose leaf will decide
If the coming year shall make me a bride."

In addition to the four great festivals of the Pagan Celtic year, there are four lesser holidays as well: the two solstices, and the two equinoxes. In folklore, these are referred to as the four "quarter-days" of the year, and modern Witches call them the four "Lesser Sabbats", or the four "Low Holidays". The Summer Solstice is one of them.

Technically, a solstice is an astronomical point and, due to the procession to the equinox, the date may vary by a few days depending on the year. The summer solstice occurs when the sun reaches the Tropic of Cancer, and we experience the longest day and the shortest night of the year. Astrologers know this as the date on which the sun enters the sign of Cancer. This year (1988) it will occur at 10:57 pm CDT on June 20th.

However, since most European peasants were not accomplished at reading an ephemeris or did not live close enough to Salisbury Plain to trot over to Stonehenge and sight down its main avenue, they celebrated the event on a fixed calendar date, June 24th. The slight forward displacement of the traditional date is the result of multitudinous calendrical changes down through the ages. It is analogous to the winter solstice celebration, which is astronomically on or about December 21st, but is celebrated on the traditional date of December 25th, Yule, later adopted by the Christians.

Again, it must be remembered that the Celts reckoned their days from sundown to sundown, so the June 24th festivities actually begin on the previous sundown (our June 23rd). This was Shakespeare's Midsummer Night's Eve. Which brings up another point: our modern calendars are quite misguided in suggesting that "summer begins" on the solstice. According to the old folk calendar, summer BEGINS on May Day and ends on Lammas (August 1st), with the summer solstice, midway between the two, marking MID-summer. This makes more logical sense than suggesting that summer begins on the day when the sun's power begins to wane and the days grow shorter.

Although our Pagan ancestors probably preferred June 24th (and indeed most European folk festivals today use this date), the sensibility of modern Witches seems to prefer the actual solstice point, beginning the celebration on its eve, or the sunset immediately preceding the solstice point. Again, it gives modern Pagans a range of dates to choose from with, hopefully, a weekend embedded in it.

Just as the Pagan mid-winter celebration of Yule was adopted by Christians as Christmas (December 25th), so too the Pagan mid-summer celebration was adopted by them as the feast of John the Baptist (June 24th). Occurring 180

degrees apart on the wheel of the year, the mid-winter celebration commemorates the birth of Jesus, while the mid-summer celebration commemorates the birth of John, the prophet who was born six months before Jesus in order to announce his arrival.

Although modern Witches often refer to the holiday by the rather generic name of Midsummer's Eve, it is more probable that our Pagan ancestors of a few hundred years ago actually used the Christian name for the holiday, St. John's Eve. This is evident from the wealth of folklore that surrounds the summer solstice (i.e. that it is a night especially sacred to the faerie folk) but which is inevitably ascribed to "St. John's Eve", with no mention of the sun's position. It could also be argued that a Coven's claim to antiquity might be judged by what name it gives the holidays. (Incidentally, the name "Litha" for the holiday is a modern usage, possibly based on a Saxon word that means the opposite of Yule. Still, there is little historical justification for its use in this context.) But weren't our Pagan ancestors offended by the use of the name of a Christian saint for a pre-Christian holiday?

Well, to begin with, their theological sensibilities may not have been as finely honed as our own. But secondly and more importantly, St. John himself was often seen as a rather Pagan figure. He was, after all, called "the Oak King". His connection to the wilderness(from whence "the voice cried out") was often emphasized by the rustic nature of his shrines. Many statues show him as a horned figure (as is also the case with Moses). Christian iconographers mumble embarrassed explanations about "horns of light", while modern Pagans giggle and happily refer to such statues as "Pan the Baptist". And to clench matters, many depictions of John actually show him with the lower torso of a satyr, cloven hooves and all! Obviously, this kind of John the Baptist is more properly a Jack in the Green! Also obvious is that behind the medieval conception of St. John lies a distant, shadowy Pagan deity, perhaps the archetypal Wild Man of the Wood, whose face stares down at us through the foliate masks that adorn so much church architecture. Thus medieval Pagans may have had fewer problems adapting than we might suppose.

In England, it was the ancient custom on St. John's Eve to light large bonfires after sundown, which served the double purpose of providing light to the revelers and warding off evil spirits. This was known as "setting the watch". People often jumped through the fires for good luck. In addition to these fires, the streets were lined with lanterns, and people carried cressets (pivoted lanterns atop poles) as they wandered from one bonfire to another. These wandering, garland-bedecked bands were called a "marching watch". Often they were attended by morris dancers, and traditional players dressed as a unicorn, a dragon, and six hobby-horse riders. Just as May Day was a time to renew the boundary on one's own property, so Midsummer's Eve was a time to ward the boundary of the city.

Customs surrounding St. John's Eve are many and varied. At the very least, most young folk plan to stay up throughout the whole of this shortest night. Certain courageous souls might spend the night keeping watch in the center of a circle of standing stones. To do so would certainly result in either death, madness, or (hopefully) the power of inspiration to become a great poet or bard. (This is, by the way, identical to certain incidents in the first branch of the "Mabinogion".) This was also the night when the serpents of the island would roll themselves into a hissing, writhing ball in order to engender the "glain", also called the "serpent's egg", "snake stone", or "Druid's egg". Anyone in possession of this hard glass bubble would wield incredible magical powers. Even Merlyn himself (accompanied by his black dog) went in search of it, according to one ancient Welsh story.

Snakes were not the only creatures active on Midsummer's Eve. According to British faery lore, this night was second only to Halloween for its importance to the wee folk, who especially enjoyed a ridling on such a fine summer's night. In order to see them, you had only to gather fern seed at the stroke of midnight and rub it onto your eyelids. But be sure to carry a little bit of rue in your pocket, or you might well be "pixie-led". Or, failing the rue, you might simply turn your jacket inside-out, which should keep you from harm's way. But if even this fails, you must seek out one of the "ley lines", the old straight tracks, and stay upon it to your destination. This will keep you safe from any malevolent power, as will crossing a stream of "living" (running) water.

Other customs included decking the house (especially over the front door) with birch, fennel, St. John's wort, orpin, and white lilies. Five plants were thought to have special magical properties on this night: rue, roses, St. John's wort, vervain and trefoil. Indeed, Midsummer's Eve in Spain is called the "Night of the Verbena (Vervain)". St. John's wort was especially honored by young maidens who picked it in the hopes of divining a future lover.

And the glow-worm came
With its silvery flame,
And sparkled and shone
Through the night of St. John,
And soon has the young maid her love-knot tied.

There are also many mythical associations with the summer solstice, not the least of which concerns the seasonal life of the God of the sun. Inasmuch as I believe that I have recently discovered certain associations and correspondences not hitherto realized, I have elected to treat this subject in some depth in another essay. Suffice it to say here, that I disagree with the generally accepted idea that the Sun-God meets his death at the summer solstice. I believe there is good reason to see the Sun-God at his zenith -- his peak of power -- on this day, and that his death at

the hands of his rival would not occur for another quarter of a year. Material drawn from the Welsh mythos seems to support this thesis. In Irish mythology, Midsummer is the occasion of the first battle between the Fir Bolgs and the Tuatha De Danaan.

Altogether, Midsummer is a favorite holiday for many Witches in that it is so hospitable to outdoor celebrations. The warm summer night seems to invite it. And if the celebrants are not in fact skyclad, then you may be fairly certain that the long ritual robes of winter have yielded place to short, tunic-style apparel. As with the longer gowns, tradition dictates that one should wear nothing underneath -- the next best thing to skyclad, to be sure. (Incidentally, now you know the REAL answer to the old Scottish joke, "What is worn underneath the kilt?")

The two chief icons of the holiday are the spear (symbol of the Sun-God in his glory) and the summer cauldron (symbol of the Goddess in her bounty). The precise meaning of these two symbols, which I believe I have recently discovered, will be explored in the essay on the death of Llew. But it is interesting to note here that modern Witches often use these same symbols in the Midsummer rituals. And one occasionally hears the alternative consecration formula, "As the spear is to the male, so the cauldron is to the female..." With these mythic associations, it is no wonder that Midsummer is such a joyous and magical occasion!

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WICCAN / PAGAN HOLYDAYS THE EIGHT SABBATS OF WITCHCRAFT
LUGHNASADH or Lammas

LAMMAS: The First Harvest

"Once upon a Lammas Night
When corn rigs are bonny,
Beneath the Moon's unclouded light,
I held awhile to Annie..."

Although in the heat of a Mid-western summer it might be difficult to discern, the festival of Lammas (Aug 1st) marks the end of summer and the beginning of fall. The days now grow visibly shorter and by the time we've reached autumn's end (Oct 31st), we will have run the gamut of temperature from the heat of August to the cold and (sometimes) snow of November. And in the midst of it, a perfect Mid-western autumn.

The history of Lammas is as convoluted as all the rest of the old folk holidays. It is of course a cross-quarter day, one of the four High Holidays or Greater Sabbats of Witchcraft, occurring 1/4 of a year after Beltane. It's true astrological point is 15 degrees Leo, which occurs at 1:18 am CDT, Aug 6th this year (1988), but tradition

has set August 1st as the day Lammas is typically celebrated. The celebration proper would begin on sundown of the previous evening, our July 31st, since the Celts reckon their days from sundown to sundown.
However, British Witches often refer to the astrological date of Aug 6th as Old Lammas, and folklorists call it Lammas O.S. ("Old Style"). This date has long been considered a "power point" of the Zodiac, and is symbolized by the Lion, one of the "tetramorph" figures found on the Tarot cards, the World and the Wheel of Fortune (the other three figures being the Bull, the Eagle, and the Spirit). Astrologers know these four figures as the symbols of the four "fixed" signs of the Zodiac, and these naturally align with the four Great Sabbats of Witchcraft. Christians have adopted the same iconography to represent the four gospel-writers.
"Lammas" was the medieval Christian name for the holiday and it means "loaf-mass", for this was the day on which loaves of bread were baked from the first grain harvest and laid on the church altars as offerings. It was a day representative of "first fruits" and early harvest.
In Irish Gaelic, the feast was referred to as "Lugnasadh", a feast to commemorate the funeral games of the Irish sun-god Lugh. However, there is some confusion on this point. Although at first glance, it may seem that we are celebrating the death of the Lugh, the god of light does not really die (mythically) until the autumnal equinox. And indeed, if we read the Irish myths closer, we discover that it is not Lugh's death that is being celebrated, but the funeral games which Lugh hosted to commemorate the death of his foster- mother, Taillte. That is why the Lugnasadh celebrations in Ireland are often called the "Tailltean Games".
"The time went by with careless heed
Between the late and early,
With small persuasion she agreed
To see me through the barley..."
One common feature of the Games were the "Tailltean marriages", a rather informal marriage that lasted for only "a year and a day" or until next Lammas. At that time, the couple could decide to continue the arrangement if it pleased them, or to stand back to back and walk away from one another, thus bringing the Tailltean marriage to a formal close. Such trial marriages (obviously related to the Wiccan "Handfasting") were quite common even into the 1500's, although it was something one "didn't bother the parish priest about". Indeed, such ceremonies were usually solemnized by a poet, bard, or shanachie (or, it may be guessed, by a priest or priestess of the Old Religion).
Lammastide was also the traditional time of year for craft festivals. The medieval guilds would create elaborate displays of their wares, decorating their shops and themselves in bright colors and ribbons, marching in parades, and performing strange, ceremonial plays and dances for the entranced onlookers. The atmosphere

must have been quite similar to our modern-day Renaissance Festivals, such as the one celebrated in near-by Bonner Springs, Kansas, each fall.
A ceremonial highlight of such festivals was the "Catherine wheel". Although the Roman Church moved St. Catherine's feast day all around the calender with bewildering frequency, it's most popular date was Lammas. (They also kept trying to expel this much-loved saint from the ranks of the blessed because she was mythical rather than historical, and because her worship gave rise to the heretical sect known as the Cathari.) At any rate, a large wagon wheel was taken to the top of a near-by hill, covered with tar, set aflame, and ceremoniously rolled down the hill. Some mythologists see in this ritual the remnants of a Pagan rite symbolizing the end of summer, the flaming disk representing the sun-god in his decline. And just as the sun king has now reached the autumn of his years, his rival or dark self has just reached puberty.
Many commentators have bewailed the fact that traditional Gardnerian and Alexandrian Books of Shadows say very little about the holiday of Lammas, stating only that poles should be ridden and a circle dance performed. This seems strange, for Lammas is a holiday of rich mythic and cultural associations, providing endless resources for liturgical celebration.
"Corn rigs and barley rigs,
Corn rigs are bonny!
I'll not forget that happy night
Among the rigs with Annie!
[Verse quotations by Robert Burns, as handed down through several Books of Shadows.]

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WICCAN / PAGAN HOLYDAYS THE EIGHT SABBATS OF WITCHCRAFT
MABON or Harvest Home

HARVEST HOME

"There were three men came out of the West,
Their fortunes for to try,
And these three men made a solemn vow,
John Barleycorn must die... "
Despite the bad publicity generated by Thomas Tryon's novel, Harvest Home is the

pleasantest of holidays. Admittedly, it does involve the concept of sacrifice, but one that is symbolic only. The sacrifice is that of the spirit of vegetation, John Barleycorn. Occurring 1/4 of the year after Midsummer, Harvest Home represents mid-autumn, autumn's height. It is also the Autumnal Equinox, one of the quarter days of the year, a Lesser Sabbat and a Low Holiday in modern Witchcraft.
Technically, an equinox is an astronomical point and, due to the fact that the earth wobbles on its axis slightly (rather like a top that's slowing down), the date may vary by a few days depending on the year. The autumnal equinox occurs when the sun crosses the equator on it's apparent journey southward, and we experience a day and a night that are of equal duration. Up until Harvest Home, the hours of daylight have been greater than the hours from dusk to dawn. But from now on, the reverse holds true. Astrologers know this as the date on which the sun enters the sign of Libra, the Balance (an appropriate symbol of a balanced day and night). This year (1988) it will occur at 2:29 pm CDT on September 22nd.
However, since most European peasants were not accomplished at calculating the exact date of the equinox, they celebrated the event on a fixed calendar date, September 25th, a holiday the medieval Church Christianized under the name of "Michaelmas", the feast of the Archangel Michael. (One wonders if, at some point, the R.C. Church contemplated assigning the four quarter days of the year to the four Archangels, just as they assigned the four cross-quarter days to the four gospel-writers. Further evidence for this may be seen in the fact that there was a brief flirtation with calling the Vernal Equinox "Gabrielmas", ostensibly to commemorate the angel Gabriel's announcement to Mary on Lady Day.) Again, it must be remembered that the Celts reckoned their days from sundown to sundown, so the September 25th festivities actually begin on the previous sundown (our September 24th).
Although our Pagan ancestors probably celebrated Harvest Home on September 25th, modern Witches and Pagans, with their desk-top computers for making finer calculations, seem to prefer the actual equinox point, beginning the celebration on its eve (this year, sunset on September 21st).
Mythically, this is the day of the year when the god of light is defeated by his twin and alter-ego, the god of darkness. It is the time of the year when night conquers day. And as I have recently shown in my seasonal reconstruction of the Welsh myth of Blodeuwedd, the Autumnal Equinox is the only day of the whole year when Llew (light) is vulnerable and it is possible to defeat him. Llew now stands on the balance (Libra/autumnal equinox), with one foot on the cauldron (Cancer/summer solstice) and his other foot on the goat (Capricorn/winter solstice). Thus he is betrayed by Blodeuwedd, the Virgin (Virgo) and transformed into an Eagle (Scorpio).
Two things are now likely to occur mythically, in rapid succession. Having

defeated Llew, Goronwy (darkness) now takes over Llew's functions, both as lover to Blodeuwedd, the Goddess, and as King of our own world. Although Goronwy, the Horned King, now sits on Llew's throne and begins his rule immediately, his formal coronation will not be for another six weeks, occurring at Samhain (Halloween) or the beginning of Winter, when he becomes the Winter Lord, the Dark King, Lord of Misrule. Goronwy's other function has more immediate results, however. He mates with the virgin goddess, and Blodeuwedd conceives, and will give birth -- nine months later (at the Summer Solstice) -- to Goronwy's son, who is really another incarnation of himself, the Dark Child.

Llew's sacrificial death at Harvest Home also identifies him with John Barleycorn, spirit of the fields. Thus, Llew represents not only the sun's power, but also the sun's life trapped and crystallized in the corn. Often this corn spirit was believed to reside most especially in the last sheaf or shock harvested, which was dressed in fine clothes, or woven into a wicker-like man-shaped form. This effigy was then cut and carried from the field, and usually burned, amidst much rejoicing. So one may see Blodeuwedd and Goronwy in a new guise, not as conspirators who murder their king, but as kindly farmers who harvest the crop which they had planted and so lovingly cared for. And yet, anyone who knows the old ballad of John Barleycorn knows that we have not heard the last of him.

"They let him stand till midsummer's day,
Till he looked both pale and wan,
And little Sir John's grown a long, long beard
And so become a man..."

Incidentally, this annual mock sacrifice of a large wicker-work figure (representing the vegetation spirit) may have been the origin of the misconception that Druids made human sacrifices. This charge was first made by Julius Caesar (who may not have had the most unbiased of motives), and has been re-stated many times since. However, as has often been pointed out, the only historians besides Caesar who make this accusation are those who have read Caesar. And in fact, upon reading Caesar's "Gallic Wars" closely, one discovers that Caesar never claims to have actually witnessed such a sacrifice. Nor does he claim to have talked to anyone else who did. In fact, there is not one single eyewitness account of a human sacrifice performed by Druids in all of history!

Nor is there any archeological evidence to support the charge. If, for example, human sacrifices had been performed at the same ritual sites year after year, there would be physical traces. Yet there is not a scrap. Nor is there any native tradition or history which lends support. In fact, insular tradition seems to point in the opposite direction. The Druid's reverence for life was so strict that they refused to lift a sword to defend themselves when massacred by Roman soldiers on the Isle of Mona. Irish brehon laws forbade a Druid to touch a weapon, and any soul rash

enough to unsheathe a sword in the presence of a Druid would be executed for such an outrage!
Jesse Weston, in her brilliant study of the Four Hallows of British myth, "From Ritual to Romance", points out that British folk tradition is, however, full of MOCK sacrifices. In the case of the wicker-man, such figures were referred to in very personified terms, dressed in clothes, addressed by name, etc. In such a religious ritual drama, everybody played along.
"They've hired men with scythes so sharp,
To cut him off at the knee,
They've rolled him and tied him by the waist
Serving him most barbarously..."
In the medieval miracle-play tradition of the "Rise Up, Jock" variety (performed by troupes of mummers at all the village fairs), a young harlequin-like king always underwent a mock sacrificial death. But invariably, the traditional cast of characters included a mysterious "Doctor" who had learned many secrets while "travelling in foreign lands". The Doctor reaches into his bag of tricks, plies some magical cure, and presto! the young king rises up hale and whole again, to the cheers of the crowd. As Weston so sensibly points out, if the young king were ACTUALLY killed, he couldn't very well rise up again, which is the whole point of the ritual drama! It is an enactment of the death and resurrection of the vegetation spirit. And what better time to perform it than at the end of the harvest season?
In the rhythm of the year, Harvest Home marks a time of rest after hard work. The crops are gathered in, and winter is still a month and a half away! Although the nights are getting cooler, the days are still warm, and there is something magical in the sunlight, for it seems silvery and indirect. As we pursue our gentle hobbies of making corn dollies (those tiny vegetation spirits) and wheat weaving, our attention is suddenly arrested by the sound of baying from the skies (the "Hounds of Annwn" passing?), as lines of geese cut silhouettes across a harvest moon. And we move closer to the hearth, the longer evening hours giving us time to catch up on our reading, munching on popcorn balls and caramel apples and sipping home-brewed mead or ale. What a wonderful time Harvest Home is! And how lucky we are to live in a part of the country where the season's changes are so dramatic and majestic!
"And little Sir John in the nut-brown bowl--
And he's brandy in the glass,
And little Sir John in the nut-brown bowl
Proved the strongest man at last."
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Recipes for the Eight Sabbats SAMHAIN or ALL HALLOW'S EVE

IRISH APPLE FRITTERS 5 ounces Flour 5 fluid ounces Water 1/4 teaspoon Salt 2 each Eggs (separated) 1 tablespoon Melted butter 2 each Large cooking apples 4 ounces Sugar Lemon juice Oil for deep frying Make batter at least an hour before required, using following method. Sift together flour and salt. Make a well in the center. Add the cooled melted butter and some of the water and egg yolks. Work in the flour and beat until smooth. Add remaining water. Leave to stand. Just before using, beat the egg whites until stiff but not dry. Fold into batter mix. Peel, core and slice apples (slices about 1/4-1/2 inch thick). Dip into batter and deep fry in very hot oil (175-180C) until golden. Drain and serve dredged with sugar and sprinkled with lemon juice.

STUFFED CABBAGE 1 Large head of cabbage 1 Tablespoon Margarine 2 Medium onions, sliced 1 Pound Lean ground beef 4 Tablespoons Grated onions 3 Tablespoons Uncooked rice 1 teaspoon Salt 1/8 Teaspoon Pepper 8 Ounces Can tomato sauce 1 Cup Water 1/4 Cup Seedless raisins 3 Tablespoons Honey (or brown sugar) 1 Tablespoon Lemon juice Trim off thick parts of 18 cabbage leaves. Blanch in boiling Water. Melt margarine in deep heavy saucepan, Add onions and lightly brown, mix together beef, grated onions, uncooked rice, 3 Tablespoons water, 1 1/2 teaspoons salt and pepper. Place some meat on each cabbage leaf, tuck in sides and roll cabbage. Add tomato sauce, 1 cup water and 1 1/2 teaspoons salt to sliced onions. Place cabbage rolls in saucepan, cover and cook slowly for 1 1/2 hours. Add raisins, honey or brown sugar and lemon juice. Cook uncovered 30 minutes. Serve in soup bowl.

HALLOWMASS CAKES 1/2 cup vegetable oil 4 ounces unsweetened baking chocolate, melted 2 cup granulated sugar 4 eggs 2 teaspoon vanilla 2 cups cake flour, sifted 2 teaspoon baking powder 1/2 teaspoon salt 1 cup confectioner's sugar In a mixing bowl, combine vegetable oil, chocolate, and granulated sugar. Blend in eggs, one at a time, stirring well after each addition. Add vanilla. Stir in flour, baking powder, and salt into oil mixture. Chill for several hours or overnight. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F Roll about a Tablespoon of dough into a ball. Drop balls into confectioners' sugar, and roll until coated. Place balls about 2 inches apart on a greased baking sheet. Bake for 10-12 min. The cakes should be a soft

and the edges should be firm. Do not overbake; they burn easily. Makes about 3 doz

HOT APPLE CIDER 1 1/2 gallons Apple Cider 2 whole cinnamon sticks 5 cloves 1 large orange, sliced thin with peel left on 1/2 lemon, sliced thin with peel left on 1/2 cup sugar Directions: In large pot, combine cider, cinnamon sticks, cloves, orange and lemon slices, and sugar to taste. Serve hot.

COLCANNON 4 medium Potatoes, peeled and boiled 3 Tablespoons Butter 1/2 teaspoon Salt 1/8 teaspoon Black Pepper 1/4 cup Milk 2 Tablespoons Sour Cream 8 ounces Kale, steamed and chopped 1 Tablespoon Onion, grated Mash potatoes with butter, salt, pepper, milk and sour cream until light and fluffy. Stir in kale and grated onion. Serve at once.

IRISH HOLIDAY POTATOES 12 medium potatoes, peeled, cooked & mashed 2 Eggs; well beaten 8 ounces Cream cheese, softened 1 teaspoon Salt 1/4 cup Butter Pepper 1/2 cup Sour cream 1/4 slice Green onions 1/2 cup Milk Mix potatoes with remaining ingredients. Mix well, but lightly; do not whip! Place in a greased 9~ round casserole and bake in a preheated oven for 45 minutes.

PUMPKIN BREAD 2/3 cup Shortening 1 teaspoon Nutmeg 2 2/3 cups Sugar 1 teaspoon Cinnamon 4 large Eggs 2 teaspoons Baking soda 1 teaspoon Vanilla 1/2 teaspoon Baking powder 3 1/3 cups Flour 2/3 cup Water 1 can Pumpkin 1 1/2 teaspoons Salt Mix all the above ingredients together, pour into 2 loaf pans. Bake at 350~F for 50 - 60 minutes. You can add dates and nuts if you like.

PUMPKIN PIE ICE CREAM WITH CARAMEL SAUCE Crust: 1 1/2 cups crushed Gingersnaps (approximately 30 cookies)) 1/4 cup butter, melted Filling: 1/2 teaspoon ground Cinnamon 1 pint Vanilla ice cream, softened 3/4 cup firmly packed Brown Sugar 1/2 teaspoon ground Ginger 1/2 tsp. ground Cinnamon 1/4

teaspoon ground Cloves 1 cup fresh or canned pumpkin 1 cup Heavy Whipping Cream -- whipped SAUCE 1 cup Caramel ice cream topping 1/2 cup chopped Pecans In small bowl, combine crushed gingersnaps and butter; blend well. Press firmly in bottom and up sides of 9" pie plate. Refrigerate 10-15 minutes. Meanwhile, in large bowl, stir 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon into ice cream. Spoon into crust. Freeze. In medium bowl, combine brown sugar, ginger, cinnamon, cloves and pumpkin; blend well. Fold in whipped cream. Spoon over ice cream in crust. Freeze 3 hours until firm. Let stand at room temperature 15-20 minutes before serving. In small saucepan, combine caramel topping and nuts. Stir constantly until heated through. Serve warm over pie.

HOT SPICED PUNCH 1 large can of unsweetened pineapple juice 1 quart of cranberry juice cocktail 1 cup brown sugar 3 - 2" sticks of cinnamon 1 Tablespoon of whole cloves Put the cloves in a cloth bag. Boil in 2 cups of water. Let cool. Pour clove water and juices into large container. Mix well. Pour into large kettle and bring to a boil. Serve hot in cups or mugs.

ROAST LOIN OF PORK 1 Pork Loin 1 small Onion, chopped 1 cloves Garlic, minced 1 Tablespoon Fresh parsley, chopped 1/2 Bay leaf, crushed 1/2 teaspoon Celery seeds 1/2 teaspoon Dry thyme 4 Whole cloves 1 teaspoon Beef bouillon salt & pepper to taste Fold 2 large sheets of aluminum foil together with a double fold. There should be enough to enclose the roast. Place roast on foil. Stick cloves into loin and sprinkle other ingredients over top. Enclose roast tightly in foil and cook in 300 degree oven for approximately 45 minutes PER pound.

PICE BACH (Welsh Cakes) 1 LB Plain flour 1 teaspoon Baking powder 1 teaspoon Mixed spice 4 oz Margarine 4 oz Shortening 6 oz Caster sugar 4 oz Currants 2 Eggs Milk Sift the flour, baking powder, and mixed spice; rub in the margarine and shortening; add the sugar, currants and beaten egg. Mix in milk to make a stiff dough and roll out 1/4" thick. Cut into 2" rounds and bake on a hot griddle until golden brown, after about 4 minutes on each side.

Recipes for the Eight Sabbats YULE or MIDWINTER'S EVE

APPLE DUMPLINGS 2 cups Flour 4 teaspoons Baking powder 1 teaspoon Salt 4 Tablespoons Shortening 1 cup Milk 6 each Apple Sugar 1 teaspoon Cinnamon Pare and core apples. Sift flour, baking powder and salt; cut in shortening, add milk and mix to smooth dough. Turn onto floured board and divide into six portions. Roll each portion large enough to cover one apple. Place an apple on each piece of dough; fill with cinnamon and sugar; wet edges of dough and fold over apple. Place on greased baking sheet, and bake at 350-F until apples are tender (about 40 minutes).

BUTTERNUT SQUASH 2 Butternut Squash, halved with seeds remove Margarine or Butter Salt 1/2 Cup Brown Sugar, firmly packed 1/2 Cup Honey 1/2 teaspoon Ground Ginger 1 teaspoon Pumpkin Pie Spice 4 Tablespoons Butter or Margarine, melted Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Place squash cut-side down on greased shallow baking pan. Bake uncovered about 45 minutes or until fork tender. Wipe cut surface with a little butter and sprinkle with salt. Return to bake cut-side up about 10 minutes longer or until browned and soft. Reduce oven temperature to 325 degrees. Scrape out the squash into a mixing bowl. Add sugar, honey, ginger, pumpkin pie spice and butter. Beat with electric mixer at medium speed until smooth. Put in buttered casserole. Return to oven, covered, for 30 minutes.

ORANGE-CRANBERRY CHICKEN WITH SWEET POTATOES 1 Orange 1 4lb.Roasting Chicken 1/2 teaspoon Pepper 1 pound Sweet Potatoes 1 Tablespoon Olive Oil 1 cup Chicken Broth 1 cup Whole berry Cranberry Sauce 2 Tablespoons White Wine Vinegar Preheat oven to 375%.Grate rind from orange(don't include the bitter white part).Rinse chicken & pat dry.Sprinkle with salt,pepper & 1/2 the grated orange rind.Place,breast side up,on a rack in large roasting pan.Roast for 30 minutes.Meanwhile pare & cut the sweet potatoes into 1 inch slices,then toss with Olive oil.Place in single layer in the bottom of roasting pan.Continue roasting 1 hour & 45 minutes,turning potatoes occasionally & basting chicken & potatoes frequently,until the chicken juices run clear when the thickest part of the thigh is

pierced with fork & leg moves freely. During the last 1/2 hour of roasting,combine Chicken broth,cranberry sauce & vinegar in a small saucepan.Bring to boiling over med.heat;boil 20 min. or until reduced to 1 1/2 cups.Peel white pith from orange,seed flesh & chop.Stir remaining rind & chopped orange into saucepan;simmer 5 min. Let Chicken rest for 20 minutes before carving.Cut chicken in half lengthwise down the middle.Spoon Cranberry Sauce mixture over chicken & serve with Sweet Potatoes.

SOFT GINGER BREAD 1 cup Sugar 1 cup Molasses 1/2 cup Butter or other shortening 3 cups Flour 1 cup Milk, sour 2 teaspoons Ginger 2 teaspoons Cinnamon 1 teaspoon Cloves 1/4 teaspoon Nutmeg 2 Eggs, well beaten 1 teaspoon Soda - dissolved in 1/4 cup boiling Water Cream the shortening and sugar, add the eggs and molasses, and mix well. Sift the flour and spices, and add alternately with the milk to the first mixture. Stir in the dissolved soda. Pour into well-greased cake pan and bake at 350-F 30 minutes.

GINGER CAKES 1 cup Shortening 1 cup Brown sugar 2 each Egg, well beaten 1 cup Molasses 4 cups Flour 1 teaspoon Soda 1 Tablespoon boiling Water 1 teaspoon Ginger>BR> 1 pinch Salt Use a mixture of butter and lard for the shortening. Cream the shortening and sugar together. Add eggs and beat thoroughly. Add the molasses and baking soda which has been dissolved in the boiling water. Sift the flour and ginger together and combine with other ingredients. Mix well. Pour into well-greased muffin pans and bake at 350-F about 20 minutes.

MORAVIAN CHRISTMAS COOKIES 2 cups Shortening 2 1/4 cups Brown sugar 1 quart Molasses 8 cups Flour 1 Tablespoon Cloves 1 Tablespoon Cinnamon 1 teaspoon Ginger 1/2 teaspoon Baking soda *dissolved in 1 teaspoon Vinegar Use a mixture of butter and lard for the shortening. Sift the flour and spices together. Add sugar and mix well. Work in the shortening with the finger tips or with a pastry blender. Add baking soda and molasses and mix thoroughly. Chill. Roll very thin on floured board and cut with fancy cookie cutters. Bake at 350-F about 10 minutes.

MORAVIAN SCOTCH CAKES 1 1/2 cups Butter 1/2 cup Sugar 4 cups Flour 2 teaspoons Caraway seeds Mix the flour, caraway seeds and sugar together. Work in the butter with the finger tips until well blended. Roll out about 1/3 inch thick on floured board. Cut in small squares. Bake on a greased cookie sheet at 325-F about 15 minutes. When cold, cover with boiled icing and sprinkle with colored sugar.

ACORN SQUASH AND SWEET POTATO SOUP 1 large Onion, chopped (1 cup) 1 Tablespoon Vegetable oil 1 1/2 pounds Sweet Potatoes, peeled and cubed (5 cups) 1 small Acorn Squash, seeded and cubed 13 3/4 ounces Chicken Broth 4 Tablespoons Milk 1/2 teaspoon Salt 1/4 teaspoon White Pepper 1/4 cup Sour Cream 2 Tablespoons Sliced Almonds; toasted Ground Nutmeg Sauté onion in oil in large saucepan over med. heat until onion is golden, about 8 minutes. Add potatoes, squash and broth. Simmer, covered, until vegetables are tender, about 25 min. Cool slightly. Working in small batches, place the vegetables with the liquid in a blender or food processor. Whirl until pureed. Return the puree to the saucepan. Stir in the milk to desired consistency. Season with salt and pepper. Heat over low heat. Remove to heated bowls. Top each serving with dollop of sour cream and a sprinkle of almonds and nutmeg.

STOLLEN 1 1/2 c Milk; scald/cool to lukewarm 3 1/2 Yeast; dry/envelopes 3/4 cup Water; lukewarm 3 cups Flour; sifted 1/2 cup Eggs; yolks/lightly beaten 3/4 cup Sugar 2 teaspoons Salt 1 cup Flour 1/2 cup Butter; softened Flour; 10-11 cups, as needed 5 cups currants 1 1/2 c Almonds; chopped or slivered 1 cup Citron; chopped 1/2 Lemon; rind only/grated 2 teaspoons Rum Milk should be cooled to about 100 degrees. Dissolve the yeast in the lukewarm water and add 1/4 cup of the cooled milk and 3 cups sifted flour. Cover the sponge with a cloth and let it ripen until bubbles appear on the surface and it is about to drop in the center. Pour the remaining milk over the sponge. Add the egg yolks, sugar and salt and beat until the ingredients are well blended. Add 1 cup flour and beat well. Blend in the butter. Add more flour gradually to make a smooth dough, or until 10 to 11 cups have been added. Some flours absorb more liquid than others. Knead in the currants, almonds, and citron, along with the lemon rind which should be mixed with the rum. Knead the dough until the fruits and nuts are dispersed well through it and it is smooth. Dust the top lightly with flour and let it rise in a warm place

about 45 minutes. Punch it down and let stand for 20 minutes. Divide the dough in half and knead the pieces until smooth. Let them stand for 10 minutes longer. Place one ball of dough on a lightly floured board, and with a rolling pin, press down the center of the ball, and roll the pin to and fro 4 to 5 times, pressing all the time to make an elliptical shape 6 inches long and 3 1/2" wide. The center rolled part should be 1/8" thick and 4 inches long. Both ends should remain untouched, resembling rather thick lips. Place this rolled out piece of dough on a buttered baking sheet and brush the center part with melted butter. Fold one lip toward the other and on the top of it. Press the fingertips down near and below the lips, pulling somewhat apart. Give a pull away from each end, pointing them toward the lips. The shape should resemble a waning moon. Repeat the process with the second piece of dough. Let the Stollen rise, covered in a warm place until they double in bulk, about 1 1/2 hours. Bake them in a moderately hot oven (375 degrees) for 35 to 40 minutes. Do not overbake them. Cool them on racks. Brush them with butter and cover with vanilla sugar.

SWEET POTATOES AND CRANBERRIES 6 sweet potatoes 1 cup cranberry sauce 3/4 cup fresh orange juice 1/2 cup brown sugar 3/4 teaspoon orange rind 3/4 teaspoon cinnamon 1 1/2 tablespoons butter 1 cup cranberries 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg Boil sweet potatoes in their skins until barely tender. Peel, slice thickly, and arrange in a buttered baking dish. In saucepan mix remaining ingredients. Simmer, uncovered, for five minutes. Pour over sweet potatoes and bake uncovered at 350 degrees for 20 minutes or until glazed and hot.

ROAST LOIN OF VENISON WITH CRANBERRIES 2 thick slices of lemon 2 thick slices of orange 2 slices of peeled fresh ginger 1 1/2 cups sugar 1 small bay leaf 2 cups fresh cranberries 4 pounds boneless loin of venison, at room temperature 2 Tablespoons olive oil 1 teaspoon salt 1 1/4 teaspoons freshly ground pepper 3/4 teaspoon finely chopped juniper berries 2 cups dry red wine 2 cups beef or venison stock 2 Tablespoons cold butter, cut into pieces Fresh thyme sprigs, for garnish In a medium nonreactive saucepan, combine the lemon, orange, ginger, sugar and bay leaf with 1 cup of cold water. Bring to a boil over high heat, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Reduce the heat to moderate and boil, uncovered, until syrupy, 10 to 15 minutes. Stir in the cranberries, then remove from heat and cool. Transfer the mixture to a glass container, coer and refrigerate for 1 to 2 days, stirring once or twice during that time. Preheat the oven to 400F. Rub the venison

with the olive oil, 3/4 teaspoon of the salt, 1 teaspoon of the pepper and 1/2 teaspoon of the chopped juniper berries, pressing the seasonings into the meat. Set the loin on a rack in a roasting pan and roast, basting frequently with the pan juices, until medium-rare (about 135 degrees F on a meat thermometer), 25 to 30 minutes. Cover the venison loosely with foil and set aside for 10 to 15 minutes before carving. Meanwhile, remove and discard the bay leaf and the lemon, orange and ginger slices from the cranberries. In a food processor or blender, puree half the cranberries and half the liquid until smooth. In a medium nonreactive saucepan, boil the wine over high heat until reduced to 1/2 cup, about 5 minutes. Add the stock and bring to a boil. Add the cranberry puree, reduce the heat to low and simmer, uncovered, until slightly thickened, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat. Strain the remaining whole cranberries and add them to the sauce with the remaining 1/4 teaspoon each of salt, pepper and chopped juniper berries. Swirl in the cold butter. Slice the venison thinly (stir any juices into the sauce) and serve with the sauce, reheated if necessary.

WASSAIL PUNCH 1 Dozen apples; baked 1 cup Water 4 cups Sugar 1 Tablespoon Freshly grated nutmeg 2 teaspoons Ground ginger 1/2 teaspoon Ground mace 6 Whole cloves 6 Allspice berries 1 Stick cinnamon 1 Dozen eggs, separated 4 Bottles sherry or Madeira wine 2 cups Brandy Ancient England gave us the custom of "wassailing". It is based on the tradition of friends gathering in a circle, whereupon the host drinks to the health of all present. He sips from a glass of hot punch or spiced ale, then passes the glass. A special bowl was used as the vessel. As each friend raises the vessel, before sipping he or she proclaims the Saxon toast "Wass hael!" meaning "be whole" or "be well." Although many versions exist, this one contains the symbolic ingredients: apples, representing fertility and health; spices, signifying riches and variety; eggs, a symbol of life and rebirth; as well as wine and brandy. The beverage is served hot, so plan on a heatproof punchbowl. This makes enough for a crowd. Just how large a crowd depends on your group's taste for rich, spicy wine drinks. Figure on at least 16-18 servings. Cook's notes: This also can be made with a combination of beer and wine, preferably sherry, with roughly 4 parts beer to one part sherry. The resulting flavor is authentic to the Colonial period, but far less familiar to contemporary palates. Prepare the punch: Combine water, sugar, and spices in a large stainless steel, enamel or glass saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, and boil for 5 minutes. Meanwhile, beat the egg whites until stiff but not dry. In a separate bowl, beat the egg yolks until light in color. In separate pans, bring the wine (and beer, if used) and the brandy almost to the boiling point. Fold the whites into the

yolks, using a large heatproof bowl. Strain the sugar and spice mixture into the eggs, combining quickly. Incorporate the hot wine with the spice and egg mixture, beginning slowly and stirring briskly with each addition. Toward the end of this process, add the brandy. Now, just before serving and while the mixture is still foaming, add the baked apples. Presentation: Serve in heatproof cups or punch glasses. Guests are welcome to take part or all of an apple.

WASSAIL 2 Quarts apple juice 2 1/4 cups Pineapple juice 2 cups Orange juice 1 cup Lemon juice 1/2 cup Sugar 1 (3-inch) stick cinnamon 1 teaspoon Whole cloves Combine all ingredients in a Dutch oven; bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 20 minutes. Uncover and simmer an additional 20 minutes. Strain and discard cinnamon and cloves. Serve hot. Yield: 3 quarts.

YULE MOON COOKIES 1 cup butter 1 1/4 cup sugar 2 tsp. grated lemon peel 1/4 tsp. salt 1 1/3 cup. flour 1 1/2 cups grated almonds (blanched) 1 tsp. vanilla Icing: 2 cups sifted confectioner's sugar 1 tsp. vanilla 2 1/2 T. water Cream together butter and sugar until fluffy and light. Add grated lemon peel, salt, flour, grated almonds, and 1 tsp. vanilla; mix thoroughly. Place dough in bowl. Cover and chill thoroughly. When dough is well chilled; or next day, roll out dough to 1/8" thickness and cut with moon/crescent cookie cutter. Place 1/2" apart on ungreased baking sheet. Bake in preheated 375 degree oven for 8 to 10 minutes. Icing: While cookies bake, combine confectioner's sugar, vanilla and water. Spread over tops of cookies while still warm, but not too hot as icing will melt. Thin with additional drops of water if glaze is too thick. Allow cookies to cool. Yield: 10 dozen cookies.

YULE LOG COOKIES 1/2 cup Brown sugar, firmly packed 3 Tablespoons Butter or margarine, softened 1 Egg 1 cup All-purpose flour 1/2 teaspoon Baking powder 1/2 teaspoon Ground cardamom 1/4 teaspoon Baking soda 1/4 teaspoon Ground cinnamon 1/4 teaspoon Ground cloves 1/4 teaspoon Ground allspice 1/4 teaspoon Ground nutmeg Red and green decorator icing Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In a medium bowl, beat the brown sugar and margarine until blended. Add the egg; beat until well blended. Lightly spoon flour into measuring cup; level off. Add the flour, baking powder, baking soda and spices; mix well. Divide the dough in half.

On a lightly floured surface, roll each half of dough with your hands to make two 10 1/2-inch logs; flatten slightly to 1 1/4 inches in diameter. With a spatula, place the logs 2 to 3 inches apart on an ungreased cookie sheet. Dip a non-serrated knife in water; score each log diagonally at 3/4-inch intervals. Bake for 11 to 13 minutes, or until set and no longer moist. Cool for 1 minute. Remove from the cookie sheet; place on a wire rack. Cool for 5 minutes. With a serrated knife, cut the logs at the scored lines. Cool completely. Decorate each cookie with decorator icing to resemble a holly leaf and berries.

Recipes for the Eight Sabbats IMBOLC or CANDLEMAS

BOILED CUSTARD 1 quart milk 4 large eggs 1/4 teaspoon salt 3/4 cup sugar 1 teaspoon vanilla Scald milk in heavy pan - do not boil. Thoroughly beat eggs, adding salt and sugar. Beat a little of the hot milk into the egg mixture, stirring constantly. Pour egg mixture into hot milk, stirring well. Slowly bring just to a boil until mixture coats a wooden spoon. Remove from heat and beat until cool. Add vanilla and chill well.

DUBLIN SUNDAY CORNED BEEF AND CABBAGE 5 pounds Corned beef brisket 1 large Onion stuck with 6 whole cloves 6 Carrots, peeled and sliced 8 Potatoes, peeled and cubed 1 teaspoon Dried Thyme 1 small Bunch Parsley 1 head Cabbage (about 2 lbs) cut in quarters Horseradish Sauce: 1/2 pint Whipping Cream 2 - 3 Tablespoons prepared horseradish Put beef in a large pot and cover with cold water. Add all other ingredients except cabbage and bring to a boil with the lid off the pot. Turn to simmer and cook for 3 hours. Skim fat from top as it rises. Remove the thyme, parsley and onion. Add cabbage. Simmer for 20 minutes until cabbage is cooked. Remove the meat and cut into pieces. Place on center of a large platter. Strain the cabbage and season it heavily with black pepper. Surround the beef with the cabbage, carrots and potatoes. Serve with horseradish sauce. Horseradish Sauce: Whip cream until it stand in peaks. Fold in horseradish.

BAKED CUSTARD WITH GINGER 3 Tablespoons Brown Sugar 3/4 teaspoon

Finely Grated Fresh Ginger 3 large Eggs, lightly beaten 2 1/2 cups Milk 1/3 cup Granulated Sugar 1 teaspoon Vanilla Extract 1/4 teaspoon Cinnamon 1/4 teaspoon Salt 1/4 teaspoon Nutmeg Mix brown sugar with ginger and divide evenly onto bottoms of 6 buttered individual custard cups or ramekins. In medium mixing bowl, blend eggs with milk, sugar, vanilla and seasonings. Pour evenly into prepared custard cups. Place cups in a large pan, then fill with hot water to come halfway up sides of cups (a hot water bath or bain-marie). Bake at 350 F. oven for 35 to 40 minutes, or until knife inserted near edge comes out clean. Remove cups from bain-marie. Run knife around edges to loosen. Place serving plate over top of cup and carefully invert custard onto plate. Serve warm or cover, chill and serve cold.

CANNARICULI (HONEY COOKIES) 4 cups Flour 1 cup Marsala Wine 2 Large Eggs 4 teaspoons Sugar 1 pinch Salt Oil for deep frying Honey Make a well in flour in mixing bowl or on work surface. Add wine, eggs, sugar, and salt. Mix well, until thoroughly blended. Knead dough vigorously until smooth and glossy. If using processor, continue mixing for at least 1 minutes after ingredients are combined. Roll dough to an 1/8" thickness or less. Cut dough into 2" squares, starting with 1 corner, roll each square of dough loosely on the diagonal to form pastry roll about the thickness of a pencil. Meanwhile, heat oil for deep frying. Fry pastries by batches in hot oil until golden brown, being careful not to crowd pan. Use a slotted spoon to remove fried pastries from oil. Drain on paper towels. Transfer to serving platter. Drizzle honey over top or dip Cannariculi into honey. Makes 4 to 5 dozen

LIEBKUCHEN (Honey Cakes) 1 cup margarine 1 cup sugar 1 egg 1 cup honey 1 cup sour milk* (see below) 2 Tablespoons vinegar 6 cup flour 1 1/2 teaspoon baking soda 1/2 teaspoon salt 1 teaspoon ground ginger 1/2 teaspoon mace 1 Tablespoon ground cinnamon Prepare sour milk and mix dry ingredients. Set both aside. Cream margarine and sugar, add egg, beat until light. Add honey, sour milk and vinegar. Mix thoroughly. Chill one hour. Roll out to 1/4" thickness. Cut into 2"x3" rectangles and place on buttered cookie sheets. Bake at 375° for 6 minutes. Frost with plain vanilla frosting. * For sour milk, add 1 T. vinegar to 1 c. milk and let stand for 10 minutes.

NOODLE KUCHEN 7 eggs 1 cup sugar 16 ounces cottage cheese 2 cups sour cream 2 cups milk 2 teaspoons vanilla 1 cup golden raisins 1/2 cup butter 1 pound broad egg noodles, cooked Topping: 1/4 cup crushed cornflakes 2 teaspoons cinnamon 1/4 cup sugar sour cream to garnish Mix eggs and sugar. Add cottage cheese, sour cream, milk, vanilla, and raisins. In separate bowl, add butter to warm noodles, stirring until melted. Combine noodles with cottage cheese mixture. Pour into 9 x 13 glass pan. Refrigerate overnight. Preheat oven to 350. To make topping, combine cornflakes, cinnamon, and sugar. Sprinkle over top of kugel. Bake 1 hour. Let dish set for about 5 minutes before serving. Cut into squares and garnish with sour cream.

PANNEKOEKEN (German Pancake) 2 Tablespoons butter 6 eggs 1 cup flour 1/2 teaspoons salt 2 Tablespoons sugar 1 cup milk Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place butter in oven pancake pan. Heat for 2 minutes or until butter melts. Spread evenly in pan. In large bowl, beat eggs slightly. Stir in flour, sugar and salt. Gradually add milk, beating until smooth. Pour into pan. Bake at 400 degrees for 15 minutes. Reduce temperature to 325 degrees. Bake 40 - 45 minutes or until it reaches a deep golden brown. Remove from oven and immediately slide pancake onto a serving plate. Fill with fresh fruit and top with confectioners sugar. Serves 6. This recipe is served at The Haddie Pierce House Bed & Breakfast.

GRANNY'S IRISH SCONES 16 ounces Self-Rising Flour 4 ounces Margarine 3 ounces Sugar Milk 2 Eggs 5 ounces Raisins or currants 1 teaspoon Baking Powder Mix flour and margarine together with your fingers until the mixture is fine; add sugar, raisins and baking powder. Beat eggs and add. Pour in enough milk to make mixture into a sticky dough (not too wet). Lift out onto a floured board and flatten out to 1-1/2" in thickness and cut out scones with a biscuit cutter. Place 6 on a greased baking sheet and brush tops with a little beaten egg (this helps them to brown). Bake 15 minutes in preheated 400~ oven. Source: Granny's Kitchen, St. Patrick's Rock, Cashel, County Tipperary, Ireland.

IRISH SODA BREAD 1 1/2 cups All-purpose flour -- unbleached, enriched 1 1/2 cups Whole wheat flour -- stone-ground 1/4 teaspoon Kosher salt 1/2 teaspoon

Baking soda 1 1/4 cups Buttermilk Set the baking rack in the center of the oven and place a baking stone (if available) on the rack. Preheat the oven to 375. In a mixing bowl, combine the dry ingredients. Mix to incorporate. Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients and add the buttermilk. Mix quickly to incorporate the milk evenly. It may be easier to mix with the hands than with a spoon. Form the dough into a loaf shape and place in a nonstick 8 1/2 x 4 1/2 x 2 1/2" loaf pan. Place in the preheated oven and bake for 50-55 minutes, until well browned and a skewer inserted in the center comes out dry. Remove from the oven and the baking pan. Place on a wire rack to cool.

MULLIGATAWNY SOUP 3 Tablespoons Butter 1 Tablespoon Vegetable Oil 1 large Onion, chopped 2 Stalks celery, sliced thinly 3 Carrots, diced 1 1/2 Tablespoons Curry powder 2 Tablespoons All-purpose flour 5 cups Chicken stock 2 Tablespoons Long grain white rice 2 Tomatoes; peeled & chopped 8 ounces Chicken; cooked & diced 1 small Apple; cooked, peeled, cored & diced Salt to taste Fresh celery leaves Heat butter and oil in a saucepan. Add onion, celery and carrots; cook gently 5 minutes. Stir in Curry Powder and flour and cook 1 minute. Stir in stock and bring to a boil; add rice and stir well. Cover and simmer 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add tomatoes, chicken, apple and salt. Cover again and simmer 15 minutes. Garnish with celery leaves and carrot strip, if desired, and serve hot.

BAILEY'S IRISH CREAM TRUFFLES 1/4 cup Bailey's Irish Cream 1 Tablespoon Butter 12 oz semisweet chocolate pieces 2 egg yolks 1/4 cup Heavy Cream Melt chocolate pieces, Bailey's and heavy cream together over very low heat. Whisk in yolks, one at a time, mixture will thicken. Whisk in butter. Refrigerate several hours, or overnight until firm. Make small balls with a teaspoon. Roll in powdered sugar or cocoa.

ROSE - HIP WINE 3 pounds of rose hips 3 pounds of sugar 1 gallon boiling water Wash the rose hips and cut them in half. Put them in large bowl and pour boiling water on them. Stir well with wooden spoon. Cover bowl and leave for two weeks. Strain off liquid into another bowl and add three pounds of sugar. Stir until dissolved. Cover bowl and leave for 5 days, stirring daily. Bottle, remembering to

cork loosely at first, and store in a cool, dark place. Push in corks when wine has finished fermenting. It will be ready to drink in 6 months.

Recipes for the Eight Sabbats LADY DAY or OESTARA

EGG-LEMON SOUP (AVGOLEMONO SOUP) 12 cups Chicken broth 1 cup Long grain rice Salt to taste 4 medium Eggs, at room temperature 2 Tablespoons Cold water 1 1/2 Lemons, juiced Make your favorite chicken soup. Strain broth. Bring to boiling point, stir in rice . Cover and simmer over moderate heat until tender. Salt to taste. Cool soup slightly and blend with the sauce ingredients listed above. Separate the eggs. Beat egg whites till stiff. Blend in egg yolks which have been lightly beaten. Then add water and lemon juice, beating till thick. With ladle, add a small amount of hot broth to the egg mixture, blending quickly. Pour this into soup and stir well. Serve at once.

QUEEN'S BISCUITS (Biscotti Di Regina) 4 cups Flour, sifted 1 cup Sugar 1 Tablespoon Baking powder 1/4 teaspoon Salt 1 cup Shortening 2 Eggs, slightly beaten 1/2 cup Milk 1/4 pound Sesame seeds Lightly grease 2 cookie sheets. Sift together in a bowl the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Cut in with pastry blender or two knives until pieces are size of small peas. Add shortening and stir in eggs and milk. Make a soft dough. Mix thoroughly together. Break dough into small pieces and roll each piece between palms of hands to form rolls about 1-1/2-" in length. Flatten rolls slightly, and roll in sesame seeds. Place on cookie sheets about 3" apart. Bake at 375~ for 12-15 minutes or until cookies are lightly browned. Makes 6 dozen cookies.

PASKHA (Russian Easter Cake) 3 lbs. Cottage Cheese 1/2 lb. Unsalted Butter, softened 2 1/2 ounces chopped candied fruits and rinds 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract 3/8 pint Heavy Cream 4 Egg Yolks 7 ounces Caster Sugar 2 1/4 ounce Blanched

Almonds, finely chopped 2 ounces Whole Almonds, toasted 2 ounces candied fruits and rinds Drain the cottage cheese in a colander with a plate on top for 2 - 3 hours. Meanwhile, place the candied fruits and rinds in a small bowl with the vanilla extract. Mix together well and allow to rest for 1 hour. Put cottage cheese in blender to whip, then place in a large bowl. Beat softened butter into cheese. Heat cream in saucepan until small bubbles form around the edge of the pan (Do Not Boil). Set aside. Beat eggs and sugar together in another bowl with a whisk until they are thick and lemon coloured. Slowly add the hot cream to the egg mixture, whisking constantly, then place mixture back in pan. Cook over very low heat, until mixture becomes the consistency of custard. Do Not Allow Mixture To Boil. Remove from heat. Stir in candied fruits and set the pan in a large bowl of ice covered with water. Stir the custard constantly with a metal spoon until completely cool, then mix gently into the cheese mixture. Stir in the chopped almonds. Russians have a special mold for this cake, but you can use a bowl or a 3 pint clay flower pot. Line mold with a double thickness of cheesecloth, leaving 2 inches hanging on the outside. Pour the batter into the mold and fold the edges of the cheesecloth lightly over the top. Set a weight on top of the cheesecake, and chill in refrigerator for at least 8 hours. Unwrap the cheesecloth from the top and invert mold onto a plate. The Pashka will slide out easily. Gently peel off remaining cheesecloth and decorate cake with candied fruits and whole almonds.

EGG NOG 1 Tablespoon Sugar Shaved ice (1/2 glass) 1 medium Egg Whiskey (or Rum) 1/2 cup Milk Nutmeg Measure one wineglass of whiskey or rum, add other ingredients (use whole milk), shake thoroughly and strain. Grate a little nutmeg on top and serve.

HONEY FRY BREAD 1 cup all-purpose flour 1/2 cup whole-wheat flour 1/4 teaspoon salt 1/2 teaspoon baking powder 1 tablespoon sugar 1/2 cup honey 2 cups vegetable oil, for frying Mix the flours, salt, sugar and baking powder together. Add about 1/2 cup water and mix well, adding a bit more water if needed to make a stiff dough. Turn out on lightly floured surface and knead until dough becomes elastic and smooth. Let rest for 10 minutes. Roll out 1/2 inch thick. Cut into squares, strips, or circles. Deep fry in very hot oil until golden brown. Drain on brown paper bags or paper towels. Drizzle honey in a very thin stream over bread and serve immediately. Sprinkle with a little cinnamon if desired. NOTE: This is a variation of the southwestern U.S. fry bread recipe.

HOT CROSS BUNS WITH LEMON FROSTING 1 package active dry yeast 1/4 cup warm water (about 110 degrees) 1 cup warm milk (about 110 degrees) 2 Tablespoon butter or margarine 1/3 cup sugar 3/4 Tablespoon each salt and ground cinnamon 1/4 Tablespoon each ground cloves and nutmeg 2 eggs 3/4 cup currants 1/4 cup finely diced candied orange peel or citron 4 1/2 cups all purpose flour, unsifted 1 egg yolk beaten with 1 Tablespoon water Preheat oven to 400 degrees In a bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Stir in milk, butter, sugar, salt, cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg. Beat in eggs. Add currants, orange peel, and enough of the flour (about 4 cups) to make a soft ball. Turn dough out onto floured board; knead until smooth and satiny (10-20 minutes), adding flour as needed to prevent sticking. turn dough over in a greased bowl; cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled (about 1 1/2 hours). Punch dough down and divide into 36 equal pieced; shape each into a smooth ball. Place balls about 2 inches apart on lightly greased baking sheets. Brush each gently with egg yolk mixture. Cover lightly and let rise in a warm place until doubled in size (about 35 minutes). Bake in a 400 oven for about 10 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool on racks for about 5 minutes; then, with a spoon or the tip of a knife, drizzle frosting over top of each bun to make a small "X". Makes 3 dozen. Lemon Frosting: Combine: 1 cup sifted Powdered Sugar 2 Tablespoon fresh Lemon Juice 1 Tablespoon water Stir together until smooth. Use as directed above

HONEY AND ORANGE TEA LOAF (Scottish} 6 ounces Self Rising flour 6 ounces Honey 1 ounce Margarine 1 large Egg 1 teaspoon Baking Powder 6 Tablespoons Milk 1 large Orange, grated rind of Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease and line a 2 lb. loaf tin. Cream the margarine and honey together in a bowl, mixing thoroughly. Add the egg and beat vigorously. Sieve the flour, salt and baking powder and add alternately with the milk, to the creamed mixture. Sprinkle in the orange rind and mix well. Spoon the mixture into the tin. Bake for 45 minutes. Remove from the oven, glaze with honey and return to the oven for a further 10 minutes. Remove from the tin and cool on a wire rack. Serve sliced and buttered.

ARDSHANE HOUSE IRISH STEW 4 pounds Middle neck of Lamb, cut into 1"

cubes 4 pounds Potatoes, peeled and cubed 10 small Onions, quartered 2 ounces Pearl Barley 2 pints Stock Salt and Pepper to taste This is the basic recipe. You can add sliced carrots and leeks to make it go further and about 5-6 teaspoons. of Worcestershire sauce or you could add a half a pint of Guinness to your stock. I make my stock from the potato peelings, carrot tops, leek ends, and any other stuff I find lurking in the refrigerator. If you put in a few lamb bones and simmer these together for several hours, you'll have a rich stock, strain well before using. You'll need to start with about 5 pints of liquid. Put everything into a large kettle , bring to the boil, and then simmer for about two hours...Add more liquid if necessary. Salt and pepper to taste

ROAST LEG OF LAMB 5 pounds leg of lamb 2 cloves garlic, sliced 1/3 cup olive oil 1 teaspoon salt, coarse or Kosher 1/2 teaspoon black pepper, freshly ground 1 teaspoon rosemary 1/2 teaspoon thyme Trim lamb of fat. Cut slits about 1/2" deep all over lamb and insert slivers of garlic. Rub all over with olive oil. Combine salt, pepper, and herbs and rub herb mixture all over lamb. Allow to sit at room temperature 20 minutes. Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Roast lamb for 15 minutes at 450 degrees, then turn oven down to 350. Continue to roast until desired degree of doneness is reached, about an hour for medium rare. Baste with pan juices once or twice. Remove from pan and allow to rest at room temperature for 15-20 minutes before carving. Potatoes, carrots, and onions may be roasted in pan with lamb. Baste occasionally.

LEMONADE 2 Tablespoons Fresh lemon juice 1 1/2 Tablespoons Sugar syrup** 1 cup Water Put the lemon juice, sugar syrup and water in a glass and stir. Add ice to chill. Garnish with lemon slices. NOTE: To make sugar syrup, bring equal parts of sugar and water to a boil, stir until sugar dissolves, and remove from the heat. Cool before using. Store unused syrup in a covered container in the refrigerator.

ROSEMARY POTATOES 1 1/2 pounds Small new potatoes 2 Tablespoons Olive oil 1/2 teaspoon Salt 2 cloves garlic, minced 1 1/2 Tablespoons Fresh rosemary, chopped Cover new potatoes with water and bring to a simmer. Cook 5 minutes. Drain and toss potatoes in pan over heat until outside of potatoes are dry. Add olive oil, salt, garlic, and fresh rosemary. Place potatoes in a pan, in one layer, and

bake in a 350~ oven until crispy and browned, about 15-20 minutes. Serve with roasted and grilled meats or poultry.

MIXED GREENS WITH RASPBERRY VINAIGRETTE 3 Tablespoons Raspberry vinegar 1 Tablespoon Dijon mustard 1 teaspoon Garlic, minced 1/3 cup Olive oil 8 cups Mixed baby greens Combine first 3 ingredients in medium bowl. Gradually whisk in olive oil. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Place mixed baby greens in large bowl. Toss with enough dressing to coat and serve.

Recipes for the Eight Sabbats BELTAIN or MAY DAY

ASPARAGUS WITH CHIVES AND BLOSSOMS 1 pound Asparagus, washed 1 Tablespoon Olive oil 1 Tablespoon Sesame Seeds 2 Tablespoons Fresh Chives, snipped 16 Chive Blossoms 1/2 teaspoon Soy Sauce Salt & Pepper to taste Blanch the asparagus in lightly salted boiling water for about 3 minutes or until crisp-tender; do not overcook. Refresh under very cold water and drain well. Remove the chive stalks to separate the flowers. In a skillet, heat the oil over medium heat and add the sesame seed. Stir for 1 minute, add the snipped chives, and stir for 1 minute more. Add the asparagus and soy sauce to the skillet with a few pinches of salt and generous grindings of pepper; stir well, cover, and cook for a minute or so. Remove the lid, sprinkle the chive blooms over the asparagus, and cover for 1 to 2 minutes so that the chive blooms steam briefly. Stir lightly and taste for seasoning. Serve hot. Comments: Bright lavender chive blossoms begin to bloom in the garden about the time the asparagus bed is at its peak. Hence, this is a natural combination and a simply tasty dish. Since chive blossoms are so strong in flavor, add them at the last minute in this recipe. Source: FLOWERS IN THE KITCHEN by Susan Belsinger (c)

GOAT CHEESE & SPINACH TURNOVERS 1 Tablespoon Olive oil 1/2 cup Diced red onion 2 cloves Garlic, minced 2 bunches Fresh spinach, stemmed and chopped 2 ounces Soft fresh goat cheese 1/3 cup Toasted pine nuts 3 Tablespoons

Grated parmesan cheese 1/2 teaspoon Minced fresh rosemary 1/2 teaspoon Grated lemon peel 4 Frozen phyllo pastry sheets, thawed 1/2 cup Unsalted Butter, melted Heat oil in heavy large skillet over medium heat. Add onion and garlic and sauté 5 minutes. Increase heat to high. Add spinach and sauté until wilted, about 5 minutes. Drain spinach mixture, pressing on solids to release as much liquid as possible. Transfer to bowl and cool completely. Add goat cheese, pine nuts, parmesan, rosemary and lemon peel. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Place 1 phyllo sheet on work surface. Cut lengthwise into 3 strips. Brush with butter. Place 1 rounded Tablespoon filling at 1 end of dough strip. Starting at 1 corner, fold pastry over filling, forming triangle. Repeat, folding up length of pastry as for flag. Brush with butter. Repeat with remaining pastry, butter and filling. Transfer turnovers to baking sheet. Cover and chill. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Bake turnover until golden, about 12 minutes. Cool slightly and serve. Makes 12

CHICKEN BARLEY STEW WITH HERBS 2-3 LB chicken breasts on the bone 2 Tablespoons Butter 1 LB leeks (3-4 large ones, 4-5 little ones) thickly cut. May substitute onions 4 cloves garlic, chopped fine 6 oz barley 3 Tablespoons red wine vinegar 3 3/4 cups water 2 bay leaves 1 Tablespoon dried sage Comment: This is originally an Anglo-Saxon recipe. The original calls for rabbit, but chicken is just as good. In a large Dutch Oven, melt the butter, then fry the leeks and garlic in the butter. Add the chicken and brown. Add remaining ingredients, reserving the sage. Bring to a boil, then reduce and simmer for 1 to 1-1/2 hours. Remove chicken from pot and let cool. Remove meat from bones and add back to the pot. Add sage. Stir well and serve. Leftovers freeze well. Serves 8

MAY WINE 1 bottle of German White Wine 1/2 cup Fresh Strawberries, sliced 12 sprigs of fresh woodruff Pour wine into carafe or wide mouth bottle. Add strawberries and woodruff and allow to blend for at least an hour. Strain and serve well chilled. Garnish with thin orange slice. The strawberries add a wonderful flavour and the woodruff adds sweetness.

MEADE 1 gallon Water 4 pounds Honey 6 Cloves 2 Sticks cinnamon Juice & peel from one lemon 1 teaspoon Activated dry yeast In a large nonreactive pot, add the next four ingredients to the gallon of water. Boil all together for 30 minutes,

then strain into a crock that will hold it with a little room to spare. When cooled, add the yeast, dissolved in some of the liquid. Allow to ferment in a cool place - 55 degrees is ideal - until it ceases bubbling and the liquor clears, then bottle, cap tightly and store in a cool, dark cellar. It should not be used for at least a month, and longer is better. This meade, unlike many other drinks, does not improve with really long aging, so it should be consumed within a year of the time it was made.

WILD IRISH NETTLE SOUP 12 oz nettle leaves and young, tender stems (use gloves to collect) 3-4 oz butter 6 oz (2 oz each) leek, onion and celery, roughly chopped 2.5 pints chicken stock 1.5 lbs potatoes, sliced .75 pint cream Salt and freshly ground black pepper Comment: from the Ashford Castle Hotel - County Mayo, Ireland Wash the nettles. Melt 3 oz of the butter in a heavy based pan and sweat the leek, onion, celery and the nettles for 5 to 6 minutes without browning. Add the chicken stock and bring to the boil, then add the potatoes. Cook over a low heat for about 40 to 50 minutes. Put soup in blender and puree, then return it to the pan, and add the cream. Salt and pepper to taste, reheat gently and check the consistency. Some extra butter may be whisked in for a richer, smoother finish. Garnish each serving with a blanched nettle leaf. Serves 8

OATCAKES - IRISH 6 ounces Oatmeal (preferably fine) 2 ounces Flour 1 teaspoon Salt 10 fluid ounces Warm water Mix flour and salt together. Slowly add warm water. Roll out on a floured board to 1/4 inch thick. Cut into triangles. Cook on a pan or griddle until golden on both sides. Dry out in a cool oven (300 degrees) until crisp. These cakes are eaten buttered, with a glass of milk, for supper, but are also terrific with wine and cheese.

OATCAKES - SCOTS 1/2 cup Shortening 1 cup Oats or quick-cooking oats 1 cup All-purpose flour 1/2 teaspoon Baking soda 1/4 teaspoon Salt 2 - 3 Tablespoons Cold Water Cut shortening into next four ingredients until mixture resembles fine crumbs. Add water, 1 Tablespoon at a time, until it forms a stiff dough. Roll until 1/8 inch thick on lightly floured surface. Cut into 2 inch rounds or squares. Place on ungreased cookie sheet and bake at 375 until they just start to brown - 12 to 15 minutes. To griddle bake; bake on a hot griddle or frying-pan until the edges begin to curl. Turn over and cook the other side. Do not let the oatcakes brown; they

should be a pale fawn colour. Put on a wire rack to cool. They are delicious served with cheese.

DONNEGAL OATMEAL CREAM 15 fluid ounces Milk 1/2 cup Medium oatmeal - cracked, not rolled 1 Large egg (beaten) rind & juice of 1 orange 2 teaspoons Sugar (to taste) 1/2 ounce Gelatin 2 Tablespoons Water 8 ounces Heavy cream, whipped Fruit sauce of choice Soak the oatmeal in the milk for 30 minutes, turn all into a pan and stir until it boils. Then simmer 3-4 minutes. Pour mixture into a bowl and add the beaten egg, grated lemon rind, and sugar to taste. Dissolve gelatin in the orange juice and water, add to the mixture when it's cooled, and then fold in the cream. Pour the whole mixture into a glass bowl and leave to set. Serve with 3-4 T of chosen fruit sauce on top Sauce: Take your favorite jam and thin with 3-4 Tablespoons of water.

MEDALLIONS OF PORK WITH RIESLING SAUCE 12 ounces Pork tenderloin, cut into 1" rounds Flour 4 Tablespoons Unsalted butter 1 Onion, thinly sliced 3 Garlic cloves, minced 1/2 cup Dry Riesling wine 1/2 cup Raisins 3 Tablespoons Balsamic vinegar 1 Tablespoon Green peppercorns, ground 1/2 teaspoon thyme, minced 1/2 teaspoon oregano, minced 1/4 cup butter, chilled & cut into pieces 1/4 cup Pine nuts, toasted Season pork with salt and pepper. Coat in flour; shake off excess. Melt 2 Tablespoons butter in heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and garlic and sauté until golden brown, about 5 minutes. Transfer mixture to bowl. Melt remaining 2 Tablespoons butter in same skillet over medium-high heat. Add pork and sauté about 4 minutes per side. Transfer pork to plate; tent with foil to keep warm. Add onion mixture, wine, green peppercorns and herbs to same skillet and boil until sauce thickens, about 4 minutes. Add pork to skillet and heat through. Divide pork among plates. Add 1/4 cup chilled butter to sauce in skillet and whisk just until melted. Mix in pine nuts. Spoon sauce over pork and serve.

SAVORY CHEESE SCONES 2 cups Flour 2 teaspoons Baking powder 1/2 teaspoon Salt 1/8 teaspoon Cayenne pepper 1 1/2 cups Grated cheddar cheese 3 Tablespoons Parmesan cheese 1/3 cup Butter 1/3 cup Milk 2 Eggs Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Combine all dry ingredients, stir in cheeses and toss well. Cut in butter. Combine eggs and milk, add to flour mixture and gently knead to form a

stiff dough. Cut dough ball into halves and pat each half into an 8" diameter, 1/2" thick circle. Cut into wedges, place wedges on a baking sheet and bake 15 to 17 minutes, until lightly browned.

IRISH SODA BREAD 1 1/2 cups All-purpose flour -- unbleached, enriched 1 1/2 cups Whole wheat flour -- stone-ground 1/4 teaspoon Kosher salt 1/2 teaspoon Baking soda 1 1/4 cups Buttermilk Set the baking rack in the center of the oven and place a baking stone (if available) on the rack. Preheat the oven to 375. In a mixing bowl, combine the dry ingredients. Mix to incorporate. Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients and add the buttermilk. Mix quickly to incorporate the milk evenly. It may be easier to mix with the hands than with a spoon. Form the dough into a loaf shape and place in a nonstick 8 1/2 x 4 1/2 x 2 1/2" loaf pan. Place in the preheated oven and bake for 50-55 minutes, until well browned and a skewer inserted in the center comes out dry. Remove from the oven and the baking pan. Place on a wire rack to cool.

SAND TARTS (OLD GERMAN STYLE) 2 1/2 cups Sugar 2 cups Butter 2 each Egg, well beaten 1 each Egg white 4 cups Flour Pecans Cinnamon Cream the butter and sugar together. Slowly add the flour, working it in well. Add the well-beaten eggs and mix thoroughly. Chill over night. Roll out thin on lightly floured board; brush cookies with the egg white which has been slightly beaten, sprinkle with sugar and a little cinnamon and press 1/2 pecan into center of cookie. Bake at 350-F about 10 minutes.

Recipes for the Eight Sabbats LITHA or MIDSUMMER'S EVE

APFELPFANNKUCHEN (German Apple Pancake) 2 large Apples, any cooking variety 1/4 cup Butter 1 cup Flour 1 cup Milk 1 teaspoon Vanilla Extract 1/2 teaspoon Salt 1/4 teaspoon Nutmeg, Confectioners sugar Preheat oven to 475. Peel, core and very thinly slice the apples: you should have approximately 1-1/2 cups. Melt 3 Tablespoons of the butter over medium low heat in a small fry pan, and sauté the apples until they are just tender. Keep apples warm while preparing

the batter. Place a 9 or 10 inch cast-iron skillet in the oven to heat for at least 5 minutes--the pan has to be very hot for this to work. When it is well heated, add the remaining 2 T sp. of butter to melt and put the skillet back in the oven; the butter should be very hot buy not brown when you add the apples and the batter. Place the flour, milk, vanilla, salt and nutmeg in a blender and whirl until smooth. Remove the skillet from the oven, quickly arrange the warm apple slices over the melted butter, and pour the batter evenly over all. Bake for 15 min., reduce heat to 375 and bake 10 minutes longer. The pancake will puff and climb up the sides of the pan. Sprinkle with confectioner's sugar, then cut in wedges and serve with maple syrup.

FRESH BROCCOLI SOUP IN BREAD BOWLS Round sour dough bread loaves, halved 1/2 pound Broccoli, fresh 1/4 cup Onion, chopped 1/4 cup Margarine 1/2 cup Flour 3 cups Water 4 teaspoons Chicken Bouillon granules 2 cups Milk 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce 1 cup Sharp Cheddar Cheese, shredded Steam broccoli in small amount of salted water for 10 minutes or until crisp-tender; coarsely chop. In large saucepan, sauté onion in margarine until tender but not brown. Blend in flour. Add water, chicken bouillon, milk, and Worcestershire sauce. Cook and stir until mixture slightly thickens. Add chopped broccoli. Bring to boiling and stir in shredded cheese until melted. Serve soup in individual hollowed out bread loaf halves. Leftover soup freezes well.

HERBED ROAST CHICKEN 1/2 cup Dry white wine 1 Lemon (juice of) 1 teaspoon garlic, minced 1/2 teaspoon Dried oregano 4 pounds Chicken, quartered 1/2 cup Olive oil 1/2 cup Tomato sauce 1 Onion, minced 1 Green pepper, minced 1/2 teaspoon Garlic powder 1/2 teaspoon Cumin In a shallow dish combine wine, lemon juice, garlic, 1 /4 teaspoon oregano and pinch of salt. Add chicken, turning to coat well and marinate for 1 hour. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a saucepan combine remaining ingredients and 1/4 teaspoon oregano and bring to a simmer. Cook for 15 minutes. Put chicken in a baking dish and top with sauce. Bake for 1-1/2 hours, or until done.

CUCUMBER SOUP WITH LEMONGRASS AND SPINACH 2 Tablespoons Unsalted Butter 2 Ribs Celery, strings removed; chopped 1 small Onion, minced 2

stalks fresh Lemongrass, tender middle chopped 2 medium Cucumbers, peeled & seeded - chopped 2 cups Chicken stock or broth 1 1/2 cups Spinach leaves 1/4 cup Fresh Cilantro leaves 3 Tablespoons Whipping cream fresh ground Black Pepper to taste Melt butter in a large saucepan. Add celery, onion and lemongrass. Cook gently until onion is tender, 15 minutes. Add cucumbers and stock. Heat to a boil; reduce heat, cover and simmer until cucumber is tender, 10 minutes. Strain solids from liquid, reserving both. Puree solids with spinach and cilantro in a blender or food processor. Add reserved liquid, cream, salt and pepper; mix until smooth. Serve warm or chilled. Makes 4 ~ 1 1/2 cup servings

GOOSEBERRY FOOL 4 cups Gooseberries 1/4 cup Water 2 cups Sugar Whipped cream Cook gooseberries in water until done (or you may use the equivalent of canned gooseberries). Mash gooseberries in blender or food processor. Beat sugar into hot gooseberries. When cold, mix with stiffly whipped cream and pour into sherbet glasses for serving.

FRESH HERB SOUP 1 Tablespoon Butter or margarine, unsalted 2 Tablespoons Fresh chives, minced 2 Tablespoons Fresh chervil, minced 2 Tablespoons Lemon sorrel leaves, minced 2 teaspoons Fresh tarragon, minced 1 cup Celery ribs -- finely chopped 4 cups Vegetable broth Salt and Pepper 1 pinch Sugar 4 slices Whole wheat bread , toasted 1 dash Freshly ground nutmeg Grated cheddar cheese Melt the butter over medium heat in a large heavy pot. Add the herbs and celery and cook, stirring, until wilted and soft, about 3 minutes. Add the broth, salt, pepper, and sugar. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for 20 minutes. Place a slice of toast in each soup bowl and pour the soup over. Dust with nutmeg and sprinkle with grated cheese

ORANGE HONEY BUTTER 2 Tablespoons Grated Orange Rind 3 Tablespoons Powdered Sugar 1/2 cup Unsalted Butter, at room temperature 1 Tablespoon honey Combine the orange rind, powdered sugar, butter and honey in a small bowl and blend until well mixed. Chill slightly and serve with scones or biscuits.

HERBAL LEMON COOKIES 1 cup Butter or margarine 2 cups Sugar, divided 2 large Eggs 1 teaspoon Vanilla extract 2 1/2 cups Flour 2 teaspoons Baking powder 1/4 teaspoon Salt 1/3 cup Lemon Grass / Lemon Balm / Lemon Basil - chopped Cream the butter and 1-3/4 cups sugar. Add the eggs and vanilla. Beat well. Combine the flour, baking powder, salt, and herbs. Add to the creamed mixture and mix. Drop dough by teaspoonfuls, 3 inches apart, on a greased cookie sheet. Flatten slightly with a fork or cup bottom. Sprinkle lightly with the remaining sugar. Bake at 350 degrees for 8 to 10 minutes or until barely browned. Cool slightly, then remove to a rack.

METHEGLIN 5 pounds of honey 1 gallon of water 1 lemon 1 sprig of rosemary 1 sprig of balm 3/4 ounce of yeast Simmer the herbs and thinly sliced lemon rind for twenty minutes in the gallon of water. Strain the liquid and pour onto the honey, stirring well. When lukewarm, add the juice of the lemon and the yeast. Cover and leave for twenty-four hours, then stir and leave in a warm place until fermentation ceases. Strain the meade into bottles and keep them in a cool, dark place for one year.

BUTTERMILK SCONES 3 cups Flour 1/3 cup Sugar 2 1/2 teaspoons Baking Powder 1/2 teaspoon Baking Soda 3/4 teaspoon Salt 2 Tablespoons Butter 1 cup Buttermilk 3/4 cup Currants 1 teaspoon Grated Orange Rind 1 Tablespoon Heavy Cream 1/4 teaspoon Cinnamon 2 Tablespoons Sugar Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Use an ungreased baking sheet. Combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt in a mixing bowl. Stir well with a fork to mix and fold air into batter. Add the butter and cut into the flour mixture, using a pastry blender or two knives, or work in, using your fingertips, until the mixture looks like fresh bread crumbs. Add the buttermilk, currants and orange rind. Mix only until the dry ingredients are moistened. Gather the dough into a ball and press so it holds together. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Knead lightly 12 times. Pat the dough into a circle 1/2-inch thick. Glaze: In a small bowl combine the cream, cinnamon and sugar; stir to blend. Brush the dough with the glaze. Cut the dough into 18 pie-shaped pieces. Place the scones 1 inch apart on the baking sheet. Bake for about 12 minutes or until the tops are browned. Serve hot with Orange Honey Butter.

ZUCCHINI BREAD 3 eggs 1 Tablespoon vanilla 2 cups sugar 1 cup oil 2 cups flour 2 teaspoon baking soda 1/2 teaspoon salt 1 Tablespoon cinnamon 1/4 teaspoon baking powder 2 medium, grated, unpeeled zucchini 1 cup chopped walnuts Preheat oven to 350 degrees In mixing bowl, beat eggs till frothy. Beat in sugar, oil & vanilla until thick & lemon colored. Sift in flour, cinnamon, baking soda, baking powder, & salt. Fold in zucchini & walnuts. Pour mixture in 2 greased & floured loaf pans. Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour.

ZUCCHINI WALNUT TOSS 3 medium zucchini 1/2 cup walnuts, chopped 1 Tablespoon butter or margarine 4 Roma tomatoes, chopped 2 Tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese Cut zucchini in half crosswise; cut each half into 6 spears. In large nonstick skillet over medium heat, spread walnuts into single layer. Cook, stirring constantly, for about 3-4 minutes, or until nuts are fragrant and start to brown. Immediately remove from pan; set aside. In same skillet over medium-high heat, melt butter. Add zucchini and cook, stirring constantly, until crisp-tender, about 4-5 minutes. Stir in tomatoes and toasted walnuts; cook just until heated through. Top with parmesan cheese.

Recipes for the Eight Sabbats LUGHNASSADH or Lammas

APRICOT WINE 1 pound Dried Apricots 4 quarts Warm Water 6 1/2 cups Sugar 2 1/4 cups Brown Sugar 1 1/2 cups Raisins 1 Tablespoon Ginger, minced 2 each Lemons, thinly sliced 2 each Oranges, thinly sliced 1/2 cup Yeast Wash the apricots in several batches of water and then dry them and cut in halves. Place in a large crock and pour on the warm water, reserving 1/2 cup of it in which to dissolve the yeast cake. Stir in the sugars, fruit, raisins and ginger. Then add the dissolved yeast and mix well. Cover with top of the crock and let stand for thirty days, stirring the mixture every other day. After thirty days strain the mixture and bottle.

IRISH BUTTERMILK BANNOCK 4 cups All purpose/bread flour 3 teaspoons Baking powder 1 teaspoon Salt to taste 3/4 teaspoon Baking soda 1 cup Raisins 2

Eggs 1 1/2 cups Buttermilk Stir flour, baking powder, salt, baking soda and raisins together. Separately, fork-blend eggs and buttermilk, then add to dry ingredients. Stir until sticky batter is formed. Scrape batter onto well floured surface and knead lightly. Shape batter into ball, then place in round non-stick casserole that has been sprayed with cooking spray. Mark a cross in the center, using a sharp knife. Bake uncovered in preheated 350 degree oven for about 1 1/4 hours. Wait 10-15 minutes before attempting to remove bread from casserole, then cool on wire rack. If desired, cut loaf into quarters and then slice thinly.

BLACKBERRY COBBLER 4 cups fresh Blackberries 3/4 cups Sugar 3 Tablespoons Flour 1 1/2 cups Water 1 Tablespoons fresh Lemon Juice 2 Tablespoons melted Butter Pastry: 1 3/4 cups All-purpose Flour 2 Tablespoons Sugar 2 teaspoons Baking Powder 1 teaspoon Salt 1/4 cup Shortening 6 Tablespoons Heavy Whipping cream 6 Tablespoons Buttermilk Preheat oven to 350 degrees Place fresh berries in a lightly greased 2-quart baking dish. Combine sugar and flour; add water and lemon juice, mixing well. Pour this mixture over berries; bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes while preparing the pastry. Increase oven temperature to 425 degrees Pastry: Combine flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt. Cut in shortening until mixture resembles coarse crumbs; stir in whipping cream and buttermilk. Knead dough 4 or 5 times; roll to about 1/4" thickness on a lightly floured surface. Cut dough to fit baking dish. Place the pastry over hot berries; then brush with melted butter. Cut a few vents in the top of pastry with knife. Bake at 425 degrees for 20 to 30 minutes, or until pastry is golden brown. Serve cobbler warm with vanilla ice cream Servings: 8

CORN PUDDING 2 cups young, fresh corn 3 eggs 1/2 cup sugar 1 cup milk 1/2 stick butter, melted 1 teaspoon salt Melt butter into 12 X 12 glass baking dish. Beat eggs and other ingredients. Mix thoroughly and pour into dish. Preheat oven to 250 degrees. Bake for 1 hour, or until firm. A small pan of water in the bottom of the oven prevent drying. Serves 4 - 6

GAME HENS WITH ROSEMARY AND GARLIC 3 Cornish Game Hens, halved 3/4 cup Olive oil 4 Garlic cloves, crushed 3 Tablespoons Dry sherry 1 Tablespoon Fine chopped fresh rosemary juice of 1 lemon Salt to taste Freshly ground black

pepper to taste Split each bird in half. Set aside. Using a very large bowl mix the remaining ingredients together. Marinate the bird halves in this mixture for 1 hour, turning often. Broil in oven 7 or 8 minutes on a side, or on a charcoal barbecue. I prefer the charcoal, but be sure the coals are not too hot. Cook to your liking.

PITCAITHLY BANNOCK (Scottish) 8 ounces Flour 4 ounces Butter 2 ounces Caster Sugar 1 ounce Chopped Almonds 1 ounce Mixed Candied Peel Set Oven to 325 degrees F. Grease a baking sheet. Sift the flour into a bowl. Add the sugar and butter and rub in to form a dough. Add the almonds and mix in the peel, making sure they are evenly distributed. Form into a thick round on a lightly floured surface and prick all over with a fork. Place on the sheet and bake for about 45-60 minutes. Allow to cool and serve sliced thinly and buttered From the booklet Scottish Teatime Recipes

POTATO, ARTICHOKE & LEEK SOUP 2 Tablespoons Butter Or Margarine 1/2 cup Chopped Onion 1 1/2 cups whole leeks, chopped (whites only) 1 teaspoon Minced Garlic 1 quart Chicken Broth 13 3/4 ounces Can Artichoke Hearts, rinsed & drained, cut into quarters 2 1/2 cups Peeled And Cubed Baking Potatoes 2 small Sprigs Thyme 1 1/2 cups Milk 3/4 teaspoon Tabasco Pepper Sauce Salt To Taste Fresh Ground Black Pepper Chopped Fresh Parsley In a medium saucepan, melt the butter and sauté the onion and leeks, covered, for about 10 minutes, or until tender. Uncover and cook until the leeks are very soft, about 5 minutes, adding the garlic for the last minute. Add the broth, artichokes, potatoes and thyme; simmer for 15 minutes, or until the potatoes are tender. Add the milk and Tabasco sauce; simmer for 5 minutes longer. Remove from heat and discard the thyme. In a food processor or blender, puree the soup until very smooth. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve hot or cold, garnished with parsley.

BROWN RICE WITH PINE NUTS 1 1/2 cups Long-Grain Brown Rice 3 cups Water 1 medium Onion, chopped 2 Tablespoons Vegetable Oil 1 Tablespoon Ground Cumin Black Pepper, to taste 1 Tablespoon Fresh Parsley, minced 1/4 cup Pine Nuts Soak brown rice in water at least 2 hours, or overnight. Heat oil in a heavy skillet with tight-fitting lid. Add chopped onion and sauté until golden brown and limp. Add rice and soaking water along with cumin and pepper. Bring

to a boil, reduce heat, and cover. Cook at a simmer for about 20 minutes. Rice should be tender and water should be absorbed. When rice is done, add chopped parsley and pine nuts.

SCOTTISH SHORTBREAD 3/4 cup butter, softened 1/4 cup granulated sugar 2 cups white flour 1/2 teaspoon salt Mix butter and sugar until well blended. Work in the flour and salt. If the dough is too dry, add 1 to 2 Tablespoons (30 ml). more butter. Roll 1/2 inch thick on a slightly floured board. Cut into rectangles approx. 3/4 inch by 2 inch. Prick each rectangle twice with the tines of a fork. Bake at 350 degrees for 18-20 minutes. Makes 30 cookies.

REAL IRISH STEW 1 1/2 pounds Mutton, cut into pieces Parsley sprigs 6 Carrots, sliced 2 pounds Potatoes Salt and pepper 1 pound Onions Place meat and vegetables in saucepan and cover with cold water. Add salt and pepper as required and flavor with a few parsley sprigs and add carrot slices. Slowly bring to a boil and skim off the top. Simmer over a very low heat for approximately 2 hours or until the meat is tender. Note: You can probably substitute lamb for the mutton and not need to cook as long.

Recipes for the Eight Sabbats MABON or HARVEST HOME

APPLE BUTTER (LOTWAERICK) 4 quarts Apple 2 quarts Water 1 1/2 quarts Cider 1 1/2 pounds Sugar 1 teaspoon Cinnamon 1 teaspoon Allspice 1 teaspoon Cloves Wash and slice the apples into small bits. Cover with the water and boil until soft. Press through a sieve to remove skins and seeds. Bring cider to a boil and then add apple pulp and sugar and cook until it thickens, constantly stirring to prevent scorching. Add spices and cook until it is thick enough for spreading. Pour into sterilized jars and seal.

BLACKBERRY WINE 3 pounds of blackberries 3 pounds of sugar 1 gallon of

boiling water Wash berries, put in large bowl and pour over them the boiling water. Stir well, then cover the bowl and leave for ten days. Strain liquid through muslin, add the three pounds of sugar and stir well. Cover the bowl and leave for three days, but stir daily. Put into bottles and cork, loosely at first. The wine will be ready to drink in six months.

BEEF & BARLEY VEGETABLE SOUP 3 pounds Soup Meat 2 Tablespoons Fat 2 quarts Water 1 1/2 Tablespoons Salt 1/4 Tablespoon Pepper 2 Tablespoons Minced Parsley 1/2 cup Barley 1 cup Carrots, cubed 1/4 cup Onion, chopped 1/2 cup Celery, chopped 2 cups Canned Tomatoes, drained 1 cup Peas Brown meat with bones in hot fat. Place meat, soup bone, water, seasonings and parsley in a soup kettle. Cover tightly and simmer 1 hour. Add barley and simmer another hour. Cool and skim off excess fat. Remove soup bone. Add carrots, onion, celery and tomatoes. Simmer 45 minutes. Add fresh peas and continue cooking 15 minutes. If leftover soup becomes to thick, dilute with beef broth. Can be doubled or tripled and freezes well.

COCK-A-LEEKIE SOUP 3 1/2 pounds Frying Chicken, cut into 8 pieces 1 pound Beef Shanks, cut into 1" pieces 6 cups Chicken broth 3 slices Thick cut Bacon 1 Tablespoon Dried leaf Thyme 1 Bay leaf 3/4 cup Pearl Barley 1 1/2 cups Chopped Leek, white only Salt and Pepper to taste 2 Tablespoons Chopped parsley Put the chicken, beef, stock, bacon, thyme, and bay leaf in a large, heavy pot and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer, covered, for 30 minutes. Meanwhile boil barley in 1 1/2 cups water for 10 minutes. Drain and set aside. Remove chicken for pot. When cool enough to handle, debone and set aside. Add leeks and barley to the pot, and simmer 15 minutes. Remove beef shanks and debone. Chop meat coarsely, and return to the pot, along with the chicken. Simmer covered, for 5 minutes more. Season with salt and pepper to taste and garnish with parsley.

DANDELION WINE 2 quarts dandelion flowers 3 pounds sugar 1 ounce yeast 1 lemon 1 orange 1 gallon boiling water Pick the dandelions on a sunny day. Pick just the heads until you have two quart jugs full. Wash flowers and put into a large bowl. Slice orange, lemon thinly and add to the flowerheads. Pour boiling water on top of them, stir well. Cover bowl, leave for ten days, no more. Strain liquid into

another bowl, stir in the 3 pounds sugar. Spread the yeast on a piece of toast, and float on top. Cover the bowl and leave for another 3 days. Remove the toast, strain again, and bottle. Cork loosely at first. The wine will be ready to drink in 3 months.

GARLIC - ROASTED POTATOES & GREENS 2 pounds Red-Skinned Potatoes, sliced 6 large Cloves Garlic, sliced lengthwise 1/3 cup Extra-Virgin Olive Oil 3 Tablespoons Wine Vinegar Salt Pepper 4 cups Watercress Sprigs, rinsed 2 Tablespoons Chives, chopped Mix potatoes, garlic and oil in a 10 x 15" rimmed pan. Bake at 450 degrees until well browned, about 1 1/4 hours. Turn vegetables with a wide spatula every 10-15 minutes. Pour vinegar into pan, scraping with spatula to release browned bits and to mix with potatoes. Add salt and pepper to taste. Pour potatoes into a wide, shallow bowl. Chop half the watercress and mix with potatoes. Tuck remaining watercress around potatoes and sprinkle with chives.

OLD-FASHIONED GINGER BEER For The Starter: 1/2 Ounce Yeast 2 Teaspoons Sugar To Feed The "Plant": 7 Teaspoons Ground Ginger 7 Teaspoons Sugar To Flavour: 1 1/2 Pounds Sugar Juice Of 2 Lemons Mix starter ingredients with 3/4 pint of warm water in a glass jar. Stir, cover and leave in a warm place for 24 hours. This is your starter "plant". Feed the "plant" with 1 teaspoon each of ground ginger and sugar each day. After 7 days strain through a fine sieve. Dissolve the sugar in 2 pints of water. Add the lemon juice and the liquid from the "plant". Dilute with 5 pints of water, mix well and store in corked bottles for at least 7 days. Use strong bottles as pressure may build up which will cause thin bottles to explode. For the same reason use corked bottles rather than those with a more secure closure that will not 'give' under pressure. The amount of sugar in the final stage can be varied according to taste.

PECAN PIE 1-1/4 Cups Pecan Pieces 2 Eggs, Slightly Beaten 1 Cup Light Karo Syrup 1/4 Cup Sugar 2 Tablespoons Flour 1/4 Teaspoon Salt 1 Teaspoon Vanilla. Preheat oven to 375 degrees Spread pecans in an unbaked 9-inch pie shell. Mix remaining ingredients together and pour over pecans. Bake slowly at 375 degrees until done, approximately 1 hour. Hint: Cover the edges of the pie crust with foil

about halfway through baking to prevent crust from getting too brown before the pie is done.

ROAST FILLET OF BEEF 1 Fillet of beef (5-6 lb) trimmed 5 Garlic cloves, slivered 1 teaspoon Salt 1 teaspoon Freshly ground pepper Tabasco sauce 1 cup Soy sauce 1/2 cup Olive oil 1 cup Port wine 2 teaspoons Thyme 1 bunch Watercress To prepare the fillet, make slits in it and put slivers of garlic in the slits. Rub well with salt, pepper and Tabasco. Combine the soy sauce, olive oil, port and herbs and place the fillet in this marinade in a baking dish for at least 1/2 hour unrefrigerated, or an hour or more in the refrigerator. Turn several times while it is marinating. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Place the fillet on a rack in a roasting pan. Roast for 30-35 minutes, basting occasionally with the marinade. A meat thermometer should register 120~ for very rare, 125~ for rare, 130~ for medium-rare. After it is removed from the oven, the internal temperature will rise as much as another 10~. Allow the fillet to rest, covered with foil, up to 30 minutes. If it needs to sit longer, you might try a catering trick: Wrap the fillet, just out of the oven, in plastic wrap. Unwrap just before slicing. Cut into slices and place on a warm platter; garnish with sprigs of watercress.

IRISH HERB SCONES 1/2 pound Mealy potatoes 4 Tablespoons Flour 1/4 teaspoon Salt 4 Tablespoons Oil 2 Tablespoons Chopped parsley 1/2 teaspoon Dried dill 1/4 teaspoon Savory 1/4 teaspoon Marjoram 1/4 teaspoon Powdered sage Oil for frying Boil or bake the potatoes, then pass through a foodmill. Mix the flour, salt, oil & herbs with the potatoes. On a floured board, roll this dough to a thickness of about 1/4 inch. Cut into triangles 3 or 4 inches wide. Fry in very hot oil on both sides until light golden. Source: Vera Gewanter, "A Passion for Vegetables"

HONEY WHOLE WHEAT BREAD 9 cups whole-wheat flour 4 teaspoons salt 2 pkg. active dry yeast 1 1/2 cups milk 1 1/2 cups water 6 tablespoons butter 1/2 cup honey Sift together 3 cups flour, salt, and yeast. Combine milk, water, butter, and honey in a saucepan and heat over low heat until liquids are warm (butter need not melt completely). Gradually add to dry ingredients and beat 2 minutes. Add remaining flour a cup full at a time until a soft dough forms. Turn out onto lightly

floured surface and allow to rest 10 minutes. Knead until smooth and elastic, about 10 minutes. Place in large greased bowl and turn to grease all sides of dough. Cover and allow to rise in a warm place until doubled in bulk, about one hour. Punch dough down and turn out onto lightly floured surface. Divide dough in half and shape each half into a loaf. Place into greased loaf pans. Cover and let rise in warm place until double in bulk, about one hour. Bake at 375 degrees for 35-40 minutes. Remove from pans and cool on racks.

Recipes for the Eight Sabbats ESBATS or FULL MOONS

CRESCENT COOKIES 1 cup butter 2 cups all-purpose flour 1 cup nuts 1/4 cup powdered sugar 1 teaspoon vanilla or almond extract Cream butter and add flour, nuts, powdered sugar, and vanilla. Shape dough into crescents. Bake in 250 degrees Fahrenheit oven for 1 hour. Roll in powdered sugar while still hot. Makes 2 dozen

TIESSENNAU MEL (Welsh Honey Cakes) 4 oz Honey 1 teaspoon Cinnamon 4 oz Brown sugar Egg 1/2 LB Flour 1/2 teaspoon Bicarbonate of soda 4 oz Butter or margarine Caster sugar A little milk Sieve together flour, cinnamon and bicarbonate of soda. Cream butter and sugar. Separate the egg yolk from the white. Beat the yolk into sugar and butter, then add the honey, gradually. Stir in the flour with a little milk as required and mix all together lightly. Whisk the egg white into a stiff froth and fold into mixture. Half fill small patty tins with the mixture; dredge the top of each with caster sugar. Bake in a hot oven (425 degrees)

MEADE 3 pounds honey 2 egg whites 1 ounce of yeast 1 lemon 1 gallon of cold water Put honey and grated rind from the lemon in a large saucepan or preserving pan with the gallon of cold water. Beat the two egg whites until frothy and add to the other ingredients in the pan. Place the pan over heat and stir as mixture comes to boil. Simmer gently for one hour. Pour liquid into large bowl and leave until lukewarm, then stir in the yeast. Cover bowl and leave in a warm place for three days. Stir daily. Then strain through muslin and bottle. Cork loosely. Push corks

down gradually as fermentation ceases. Store bottles in a cool, dark place. The mead will be ready to drink in one year.

OATCAKES 1 1/4 cups sugar 2 cups rolled oats 2 cups flour 1 teaspoon baking powder 1 teaspoon salt 1 1/4 cups shortening 1/2 teaspoon baking soda 1/2 cup boiling water 2 cups bran flakes Add soda to boiling water and let stand until cool. Mix together flour, baking powder, salt, bran flakes, rolled oats and sugar. Cut in shortening; add water and soda. Roll out thin on a floured board. Bake in hot oven until golden brown.